Encyclopaedia Forzea

II

Encyclopædia Eorzea

II

THE INVENTORY OR INDEX

CONTAINING THE CONTENTS OF VIII BOOKS
CONTINUING THE HISTORY OF ALDENARD, ILSABARD, AND OTHARD

Preface 004

The First Book
HYDAELYN 005

Charting the Continents 006
Far Eastern Geography 008
Eastern Culture and Technology 012
Far Eastern Faiths 016
Eorzean Faiths 020
The Saints of the Twelve 026
The Advent of Flight 030
A World of Words 034

The Second Book
HER TALES 041

Soul Surrender 042
The Far Edge of Fate 044
Stormblood 046
The Legend Returns 056
Rise of a New Sun 058
Under the Moonlight 060
Garlemald and the Far East 062
The Omega Records 064

The Third Book
HER LANDS 067

The Republic of Ala Mhigo 068
The Fringes 072
The Peaks 074
The Lochs 076
Hingashi 078
The Ruby Sea 086
Doma 088
Yanxia 094
The Azim Steppe 096
The Kingdom of Dalmasca 098

The Fourth Book
HER SERVANTS 101

The Ala Mhigan Resistance 102
Cast of Kugane 103
Cast of the Ruby Sea 104
The Confederacy 105
Sui-no-Sato 106
The Sons and Daughters of Yanxia 107
The Mol Tribe 108
The Oronir Tribe 109
The Dotharl Tribe 110
The People of the Steppe 111
The Dataq and Goro Tribes 112
The M Tribe 113
The Faces of Gyr Abania 114
The Imperial Garlean Army 116
The Majestic Theater Company 118
Faces from Journeys Past 120
Disciples of War and Magic: Friends and Foes 122
Disciples of the Land and Hand: Masters and Colleagues 126
The Agents of Enquiry: Their Clients and Quarry 129

The Fifth Book
HER BOUNDS 131

Chronicles of Courage 132
The Sastasha Seagrot 133
The Tam-Tara Deepcroft 134
Copperbell Mines 135
Halatali 136
The Thousand Maws of Toto-Rak 137
Haukke Manor 138
Brayflox's Longstop 139
The Sunken Temple of Qarn 140
Cutter's Cry 141
The Stone Vigil 142
Dzemael Darkhold 143
The Aurum Vale 144
The Wanderer's Palace 145
Castrum Meridianum 146
The Praetorium 147
Amdapor Keep 148
Pharos Sirius 149
The Lost City of Amdapor 150
Hullbreaker Isle 151
Snowcloak 152
The Keeper of the Lake 153
The Dusk Vigil 154
Sohm Al 155
The Aery 156
The Vault 157
The Great Gubal Library 158
The Aetherochemical Research Facility 159
Neverreap 160
The Fractal Continuum 161
Saint Mocianne's Arboretum 162
The Antitower 163
Sohr Khai 164
Xelphatol 165
Baelsar's Wall 166
The Sirensong Sea 167
Shisui of the Violet Tides 168
Bardam's Mettle 169
Doma Castle 170
Castrum Abania 171
Ala Mhigo 172
Kugane Castle 173
The Temple of the Fist 174
The Drowned City of Skalla 175
Hells' Lid 176
The Swallow's Compass 177
The Palace of the Dead 178
Heaven-on-High 179
The Forbidden Land, Eureka 180

The Sixth Book
HER DESIGNS 181

Red Mage 182
Samurai 184
Weapons Across Hydaelyn 186
- The One-handed Sword 188
- The Two-handed Axe 190
- The Two-handed Sword 192
- The Fist 194
- The Polearm 196
- The Knife 198
- The Katana 200
- The Bow 202
- The Firearm 204
- Thaumaturges' Arms 206
- Tomes of Summoning 208
- Dueling Arms 210
- Conjurers' Arms 212
- Tomes of Scholarly Knowledge 214
- Astrologians' Arms 216
- The Shield 218

Armor Across Hydaelyn 220
- A Paladin's Panoply 222
- A Warrior's Panoply 223
- A Dark Knight's Panoply 224
- A Monk's Panoply 225
- A Dragoon's Panoply 226
- A Ninja's Panoply 227
- A Samurai's Panoply 228
- A Bard's Panoply 229
- A Machinist's Panoply 230
- A Black Mage's Panoply 231
- A Summoner's Panoply 232
- A Red Mage's Panoply 233
- A White Mage's Panoply 234
- A Scholar's Panoply 235
- An Astrologian's Panoply 236

The Seventh Book
HER BURDENS 237

The Kojin & Susano 238
The Ananta & Sri Lakshmi 240
The Namazu & The Big One 242
The Lupin 244
The Tengu 245
The Bangaa 246
The Seeq 247
The Matanga 248
Other Primals 249

The Eighth Book
HER CREATURES 251

Beastkin 252
Seedkin 254
Vilekin 255
Wavekin 256
Cloudkin 258
Scalekin 259
Forgekin 260
Ashkin 262
Soulkin 263
Voidsent 266
Elementals 269
Chimeras 270
Elite Marks 271
- Middle La Noscea 271
- Lower La Noscea & Eastern La Noscea 272
- Western La Noscea & Upper La Noscea 273
- Outer La Noscea & The Central Shroud 274
- The East Shroud & The South Shroud 275
- The North Shroud & Western Thanalan 276
- Central Thanalan & Eastern Thanalan 277
- Southern Thanalan & Northern Thanalan 278
- The Coerthas Central Highlands & Mor Dhona 279
- The Coerthas Western Highlands 280
- The Dravanian Forelands 281
- The Churning Mists 282
- The Sea of Clouds 283
- Azys Lla 284
- The Dravanian Hinterlands 285
- The Fringes 286
- The Peaks 287
- The Lochs 288
- The Ruby Sea 289
- Yanxia 290
- The Azim Steppe 291

Domesticated Beasts 292
Legendary Creatures 298
Auspices 300
The Lucavi 302

SUPPLEMENTS

Far Eastern Script 040
Further Reading 100
The Sins of Sasamo 130
Undefining Beastmen 250

Preface

This encyclopedia is a labor of love—a love for Eorzea and the lands beyond her borders.
It is a compilation of the knowledge of our forebears.
Of their histories and legends. Of their fables and folktales.

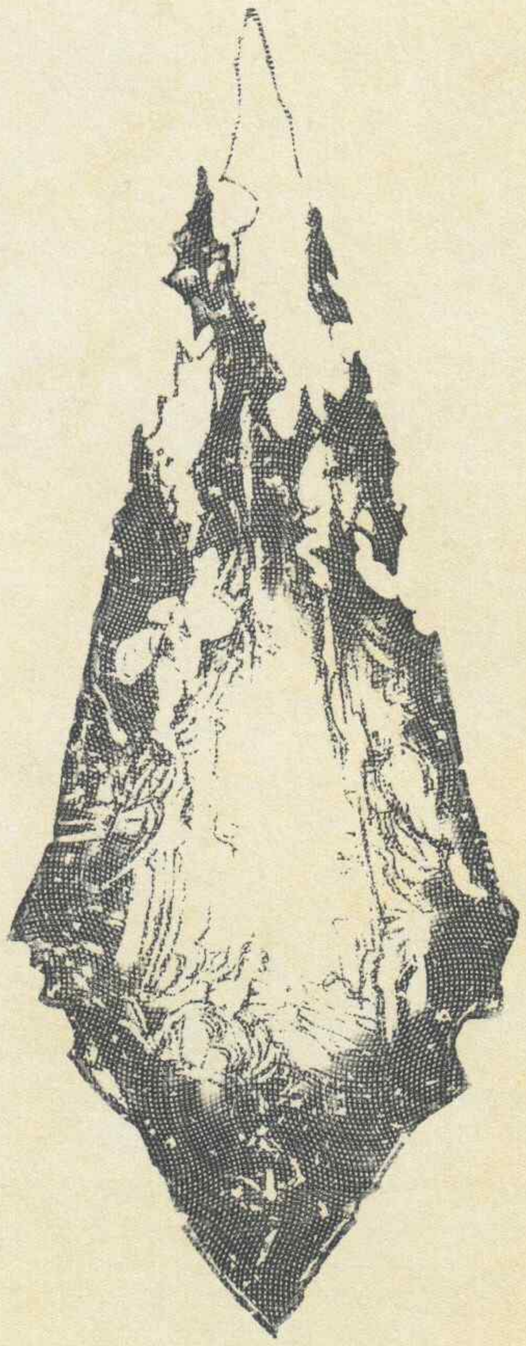
It is a great sentinel, burgeoned from a seed planted at the dawn of time,
nurtured from a tiny sapling and seen through the storms of War and Calamity,
protected that its boughs might once again bear fruit from which seeds may fall anew.

It is proof that knowledge is naught without wings to carry it, without winds to whisper its secrets.
It is naught without you, the reader, to see it passed on to the next generation
where it might continue guiding us all to a better tomorrow.

Encyclopædia Eorzea II

BOOK I

HYDAELYN



CHARTING THE CONTINENTS

A map of Eorzea, with the continent of Aldenard at its center, has long been an indispensable item for adventurers and peddlers alike. Recently, however, its place in the inventory of the well traveled is being taken by an expanded work of cartography which includes the entirety of the Three Great Continents. The following is a history of this greater map's creation, and a detailed overview of the geography depicted thereon.

It Begins with a Single Step

Men have been attempting to capture the shape of the world on parchment since days of old. Based upon folklore and guesswork, many of these maps were akin to illustrated scrolls of myth and legend, and, while beautiful to look upon, were riddled with terrible inaccuracies.

Such works became redundant with the appearance of a truly comprehensive portrayal of Eorzea and its regions. Roddard Ironheart, an explorer of great renown, spent decades traversing the realm on foot that he might chart the lay of the land with his own two eyes. His dedication resulted in a work of unmatched precision, affording travelers the first map with which one could reliably plan far-reaching journeys.

The question, then, is what drove Roddard to draft this cartographical masterpiece? To understand his motives, it is necessary to learn the circumstances of his birth, and trace the path of his earliest meanderings.

Roddard was born to a pair of performers who belonged to a traveling troupe—his father a lute player and his mother a dancer. They raised their son on the road, the rattling planks of a chocobo-drawn cart serving as Roddard's first home. Considering the ever-changing scenery of his childhood, it is small wonder that the man he became could never settle in one place for long. When Roddard came of age, a tall and gangly youth, he inherited his father's lute, and struck out to travel the roads alone. His was a life of ceaseless motion, walking hither and yon for malms at a time, halting only to strum songs for his daily bread before moving on to the next town and the next audience. Soon, however, Roddard found that his sedate journeys from village to town, and town to city, were unable to sate his growing wanderlust.

Thus did he lay plans to venture to a place uncharted and unseen by any explorer: the mythical plains of Paglth'an. From the outset, it was an endeavor doomed to catastrophe.

To reach the ancestral home of the Amalj'aa, Roddard needed to cross the badlands to the northeastern edge of Thanalan. The map he had purchased in an Ul'dahn back alley, however, was a less-than-authentic representation of the terrain. Unsure of his direction, the hapless adventurer stumbled through the sun-blasted rocks for four days, until he finally collapsed from exhaustion. Yet even as the path to Thal's hall stretched out before him, Roddard was rescued from his fate by a passing caravan.

The near-fatal experience instilled within the young man a profound respect for the importance of preparation and dependable cartography, and it was shortly after his misadventure that Roddard Ironheart—the now-legendary explorer—would embark upon a lifelong expedition to draft a true and accurate rendition of all the lands of Eorzea.

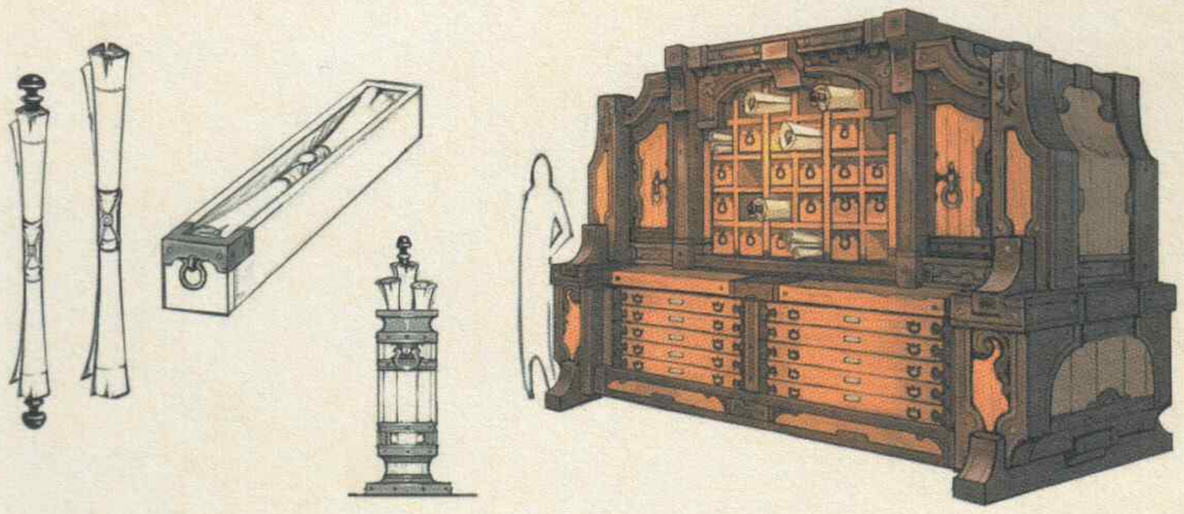
Cartography of Eorzea and the Three Great Continents

Following decades of careful exploration, Roddard Ironheart completed his map of Eorzea in the 1,506th year of the Sixth Astral Era. The day he unveiled the finished work, he inscribed these words onto the crisp new parchment: "A map is as precise as the malms walked in her making, yet I fear these feet have but far too few between them. May she serve faithfully any who would employ her for good, and shun all who would fill her borders with blood. Twelve see the steps taken by those who heed her humble guidance ensure her legacy endures."

For seventy years now, those who inherited Ironheart's name, or even simply his passion, have been encouraged by his words to expand upon his original work. And their additions have not been confined to the continent of Aldenard. Intrepid cartographers have ventured to the shores of Ilsabard and Othard, and even charted the islands of Hingashi in the distant east. These findings have been printed together on a single scroll to create a map of the Three Great Continents—a comparatively recent work which is rapidly becoming the standard for navigators and explorers across Hydaelyn.

Stretching between Eorzea and the lands of the east is the Garlean-controlled continent of Ilsabard. Owing to the imperial military's disinterest in seafaring, however, its naval presence is small, and travelers who remain a safe distance from the coastline risk little chance of reprisal. On the contrary, Limsa Lominsan privateers—emboldened by the success of Operation Archon—prowl the waters of the Bounty, and prey upon the Empire's ships with relative impunity. It is thus possible for even a humble trading vessel to avoid imperial interference by sailing across the Sirensong Sea or the Drown, and arrive in the Far East via the "Southern Sea Road." Connecting Eorzea to the independent Near Eastern city-state of Radz-at-Han, this route offers its own perils, not the least of which are its swift and unpredictable currents. Despite these dangers, more and more travelers are visiting the exotic ports of the Ruby Sea, and eager mapmakers are slowly but surely capturing the region's geography with ink and parchment.

Refinements are being made not only to maps of the Far East but to those of territories within Eorzea as well. The end of the Dragonsong War culminated in a political shift within the walls of Ishgard, and the heretofore isolated nation has once again flung open its gates to outside visitors. Cartographers have since been able to fill in that region of the Three Great Continents with near-forgotten locations, including the majestic Sohm Al and the towering Cenotaph, symbol of the newly repopulated town of Idyllshire. Such significant additions often thus reflect the march of history itself.



The carefully rolled wares of a map merchant. In a capital city such as Ul'dah, where traders gather from across the realm, it is no difficult task to locate a seller of charts and maps. Meticulous depictions of Eorzea and the Three Great Continents; smaller regional maps of Thanalan, La Noscea, and the Black Shroud; and even enlarged diagrams of highly specific territories can all be had for a price.

FAR EASTERN GEOGRAPHY

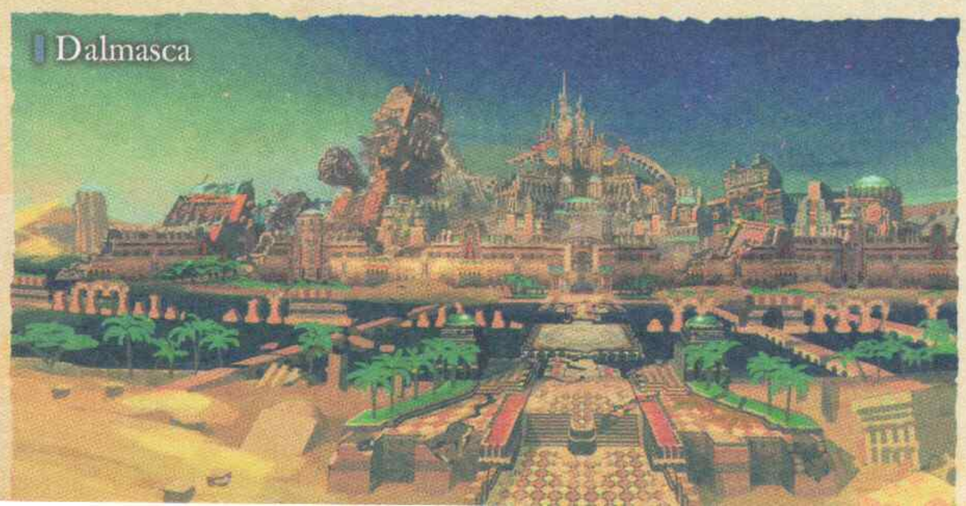
In the strictest sense of the definition, the "Far East" encompasses the continent of Othard and its surrounding islands. For a more complete picture of the region's geography, however, one should not neglect the study of Thavnair, and the lands of the Near East.

A Greylic's Bend

Greylic's Bend is situated on the southernmost edge of Othard, and is known for its extraordinarily jagged shoreline. Larger ships with deep draws routinely give the area a wide berth to avoid the many reefs submerged in its coastal waters.

B Dalmasca

A land dominated by the arid expanse of the Dalmasca Desert. In contrast to the unrelenting lifelessness of the Burn just north of the Skatay Range, the harshness of this region is softened by the presence of numerous oases. These pockets of plenty allow overland caravans to rest and resupply on their way from northern to eastern provinces, bringing wealth and trade to Dalmascan settlements. The Royal City of Rabanastre—the Desert Sapphire—was once the most prominent example of such prosperity.

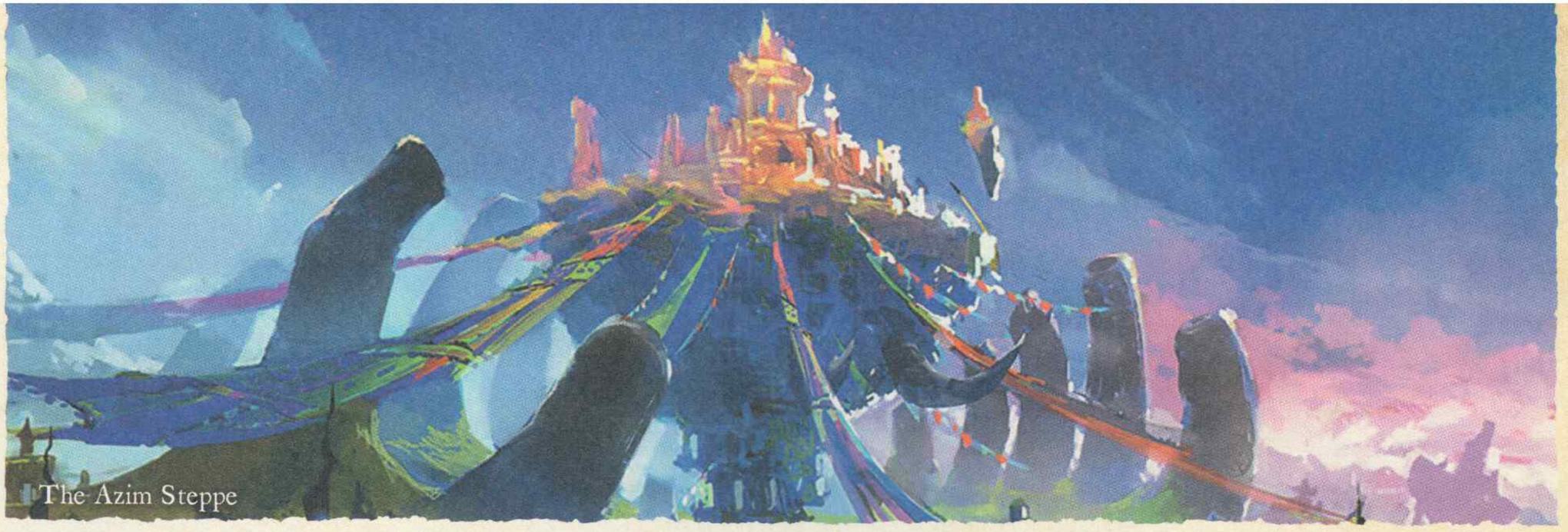


C Skatay Range

This range of precipitous mountains begins in the east of Othard, and extends west into Ilsabard. Had this natural barrier not shielded the region of Dalmasca from the barren wastes of the Burn to the north, the latter's devastation may have spread even further southward.

D The Burn

This land of ashen death is the result of rituals performed in the ancient past—a prolonged succession of primal summonings that leeched the area of all vitality. Its waterways were drained and corrupted beyond recovery, leaving the green foliage of plant life all but a distant memory. Owing its name to the seared appearance of the endlessly stark landscape, the Burn's inhabitants are restricted to those creatures hardy enough to endure the impossibly dry conditions.


The Azim Steppe

E Nagxia

Found to the south of Yanxia on Othard's eastern shore, the land of Nagxia is known for the heat and humidity of its subtropical climate. Coastal winds pick up moisture heated over the Glass Ocean, and collide with the eastern reaches of the Skatay Range. This forms billowing clouds, which then lash the ground below with an almost constant deluge of rain. The region's dense jungle and swampy ground make for poor farming—a fact which has likely contributed to Nagxia's failure to produce an historically significant nation.

F Yanxia

Yanxia is situated in the center of Othard's eastern reaches, its lands made fertile by the waters of the One River. The region has long been hailed as Othard's granary, and even now the pillar-like rock formations which dominate the landscape are threaded through with cultivated fields. As well as sustaining the largest population on the continent for centuries, this bountiful territory has also been the catalyst of innumerable bloody battles fought over its control.

G The Fanged Crescent

The Fanged Crescent is the area of Yanxia found on the west bank of the One River. If one imagines the mountain range coiled around Othard as a great serpent, then its head would hold this territory in its distended jaws.

H The Bay of Yanxia

This enormous bay is bounded by Yanxia to the south, the Azim Steppe to the west, and Ryakgyr Peninsula to the east.

I The Azim Steppe

A sweeping grassland covering vast swaths of northern Othard, the Azim Steppe is the ancestral home of the Au Ra. This region of chill winds and savage beasts shares a name with the Dawn Father—the patriarchal deity who features prominently in the Auri myth of creation.

J The Nhaama

Stretching south of the Azim Steppe, this desert region is named after the Dusk Mother—a goddess who plays a principal role in the creation myth of the Au Ra. Bleak and inhospitable, the Nhaama is nonetheless home to several tribes of Xaela whose people have successfully adapted their ways to survive the harsh environment.

Yanxia

K The Tail Mountains

Originating in the north of the Azim Steppe and sprawling away to the west, the Tail Mountains comprise the hind end of Othard's winding serpent of stone peaks. Their heights also serve as the source of the One River—multiple streams flow down their slopes to gather in the grasslands, and emerge as a single, mighty current to split the land of Yanxia in twain.

L Ryakgyr Peninsula

This great hook of land protrudes from the northeastern corner of Othard, and boasts temperatures so cold that ice floes from the Blindfrost reach its northern shores intact. The peninsula is sparsely populated, with small clans of hunters being the only known inhabitants.

M The Arras

A coastal region extending from the north of the Azim Steppe to the edge of Ryakgyr Peninsula, the Arras is an unbroken line of sheer cliffs. Efforts to construct a major port in the area have been discouraged by the ocean's seasonal freezing, as well as the presence of megaptera—sea monsters said to dwarf even the largest gyuki.

N Blindfrost

The sea that greets Othard's northern shoreline. Perpetually choked with drifting ice floes and hammered by violent storms, the Blindfrost has no known safe route for trade or travel.

O The Dalvalan Grath

In the northwestern extremes of Othard, beyond the peaks of the Tail Mountains, the land transforms into a blinding white tundra. A tribe of hunters, relatives of the Xaela, abandoned the plentiful Azim Steppe in ages past, and their descendants yet eke out a tenuous existence in this frozen wasteland.

P The Knowing Sea

Bound by Ilsabard on one side and Othard on the other, this inland sea is so named for its place at what northern-province natives consider the edge of the known world. The Knowing Sea is notorious for its tempestuous weather—cold currents flowing in from the Blindfrost combine with ferocious gales from the Burn to birth endless roiling storms.

Q The Unpromised

This island once served as a stronghold from which Chaghagan Khan, a Xaela of legendary renown, launched a conquest into Ilsabard. His forces swept across the continent's northern nations, reaping and pillaging with savage abandon. When they returned to divide the spoils, however, the victory feast devolved into an ugly quarrel, culminating in the death of the king. The island is tainted by the tale to this day: the story of a monarch's greed, and his attempt to deny his warriors their promised share.

Hingan Geography

A Ruby Tide

Commonly known as the "Ruby Sea," these waters lie between the islands of Hingashi and the shores of Yanxia. Seasonal tides bring in teeming patches of plankton, providing an ample source of food for the sea life which dwells there. The Kojin, a beast tribe easily recognized by their turtle-like shells, also claim this sea as their domain.

B The Glass Ocean

So named for the way in which its calmed waters glint in the sunlight, the Glass Ocean is the great body of water lying to the southeast of Othard and Hingashi. Though famed for its picturesque tranquility, seasonal typhoons can transform the smooth surface into colossal waves which toss about even the largest vessels. Drawing from the folklore of the Four Lords, Hingan sailors often use the term the "wrath of Genbu" when speaking of this violent phenomenon.

C Koshu

The largest of the Hingan isles, Koshu is home to the capital of Bukyo, and is thus often referred to as the nation's main island. With a comparatively warm climate and plentiful water, agriculture is a thriving industry—a blessing balanced out, perhaps, by the frequency of the volcanic island's earthquakes.

D Daitenzan

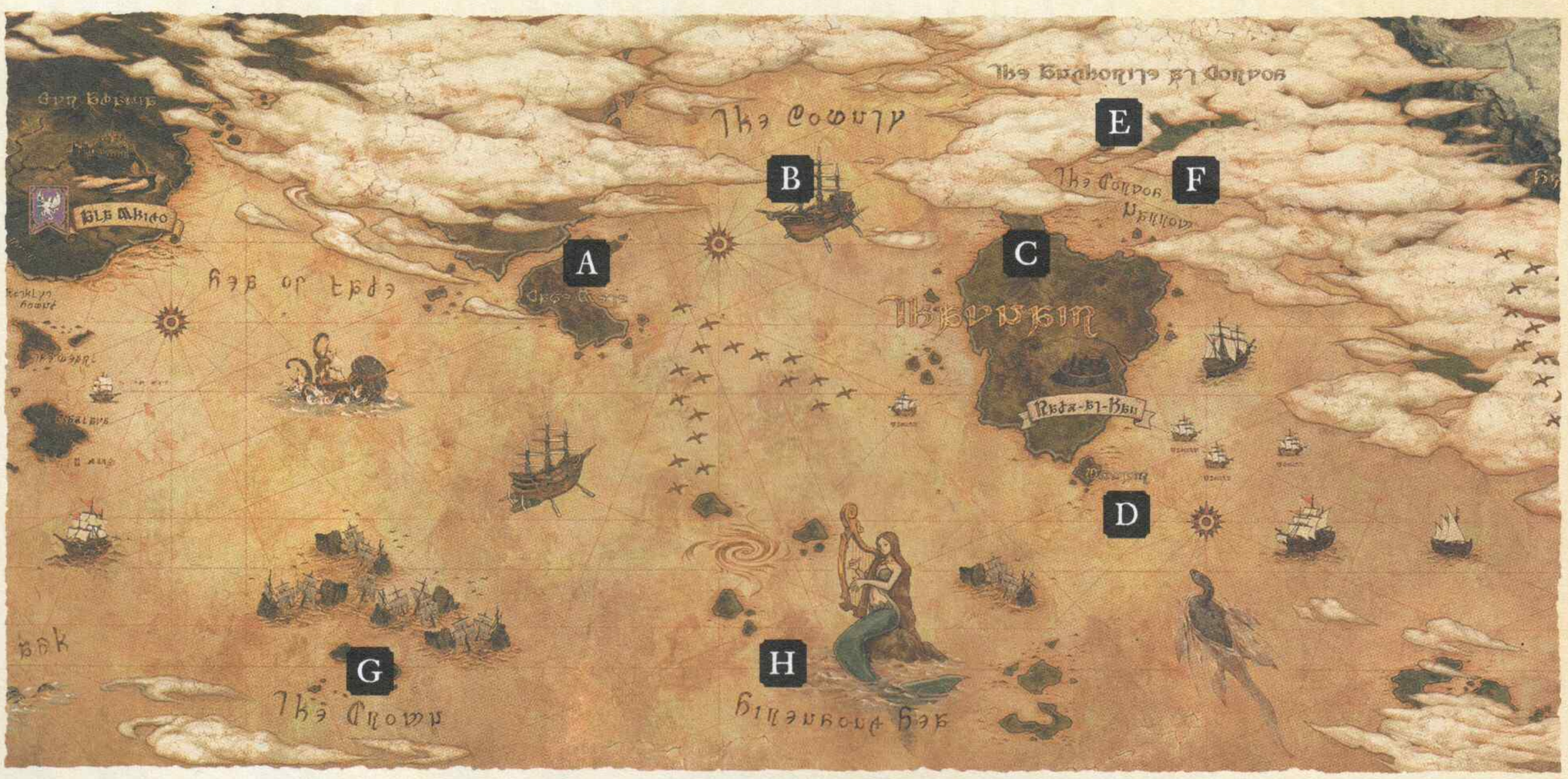
The tallest peak in Hingashi. Rising from the center of Koshu, this solitary giant towers over its surrounds with breathtaking majesty. Unmelting snow forms a perpetual crown at its summit, and the mountain's beauty is unchanging no matter the direction from which it is admired. Since the beginning of Hingashi's history, Daitenzan has been the focus of religious belief, as well as the beloved subject of many a work of fine art.

E Shishu

Shishu is one of Hingashi's larger islands, second only to Koshu in size. When viewed from the continent, the isle stands as the entryway to the nation, an image reinforced by the port town of Kugane as it welcomes ships to Shishu's southwest shore.

Shishu

Thavnairian Geography



A Cape Mete

In the year 912 of the Sixth Astral Era, Captain Maetistym the Lithe, a native of Limsa Lominsa, declared his discovery of a sea route to the nation of Hingashi. The place he claimed was the Far Eastern nation was eventually found to be an island situated between the Sea of Jade and the Bounty. To immortalize his foolish mistake, the cape the captain made land upon was later named with the antiquated term for "dream."

B The Bounty

The Bounty is the name given to the sea south of Ilsabard. Its aptly named waters—teeming with an abundance of ocean life suitable for the dinner table—are considered to stretch as far as Cape Mete in the west, and to Thavnair and the Corvos Narrow in the east.

C Thavnair

Larger even than Eorzea's Vylbrand, this island in the east of the Bounty is home to the city-state of Radz-at-Han. With the city's port open to all nations, Radz-at-Han comprises one corner of the trade-relations triangle that exists between Eorzea, the Near East, and Hingashi.

D Uznair

The entirety of this small island to the south of Thavnair is the property of House Sener, a wealthy family of skilled alchemists. Docking at Uznair is strictly forbidden unless one has secured the proper permissions in advance.

E The Anchorite at Corvos

On the northern shore of the Corvos Narrow stands an enormous right foot, remnant of an ancient monument. Legend has it that the left foot was planted on Thavnairian soil, supporting a colossal statue that once straddled the Narrow itself. Whether the victim of malicious intent or simply the ravages of time, the spectacle of this immense sentinel has since been lost to the ages.

F The Corvos Narrow

The Corvos Narrow flows between Thavnair and the continent of Ilsabard. If legends are to be believed, the now-ruined Anchorite statue once loomed over the strait, a massive foot on each coast. Whatever the truth of the matter, rum-addled sailors are fond of using the phrase "scratching the crotch" to describe passage through these waters.

G The Drown

This stretch of ocean lies between the Sea of Ash to the west, and the Sea of Jade to the north. A treacherous region of violent currents and frequent storms, the Drown is haunted by the ghosts of many a sunken crew. Despite its perils, however, those who travel often between Eorzea and the Far East still consider it preferable to clashing with the Garlean navy.

H Sirensong Sea

Seafarers believe this sea to be the domain of sirens—monstrous maidens with enchanting voices who lure sailors to their doom upon jagged rocks. Taking advantage of such superstitions, some have used the area to house exiles and convicts. It is said that the government of Radz-at-Han once maintained a prison island here, but has since abandoned its operation.

Sirensong Sea

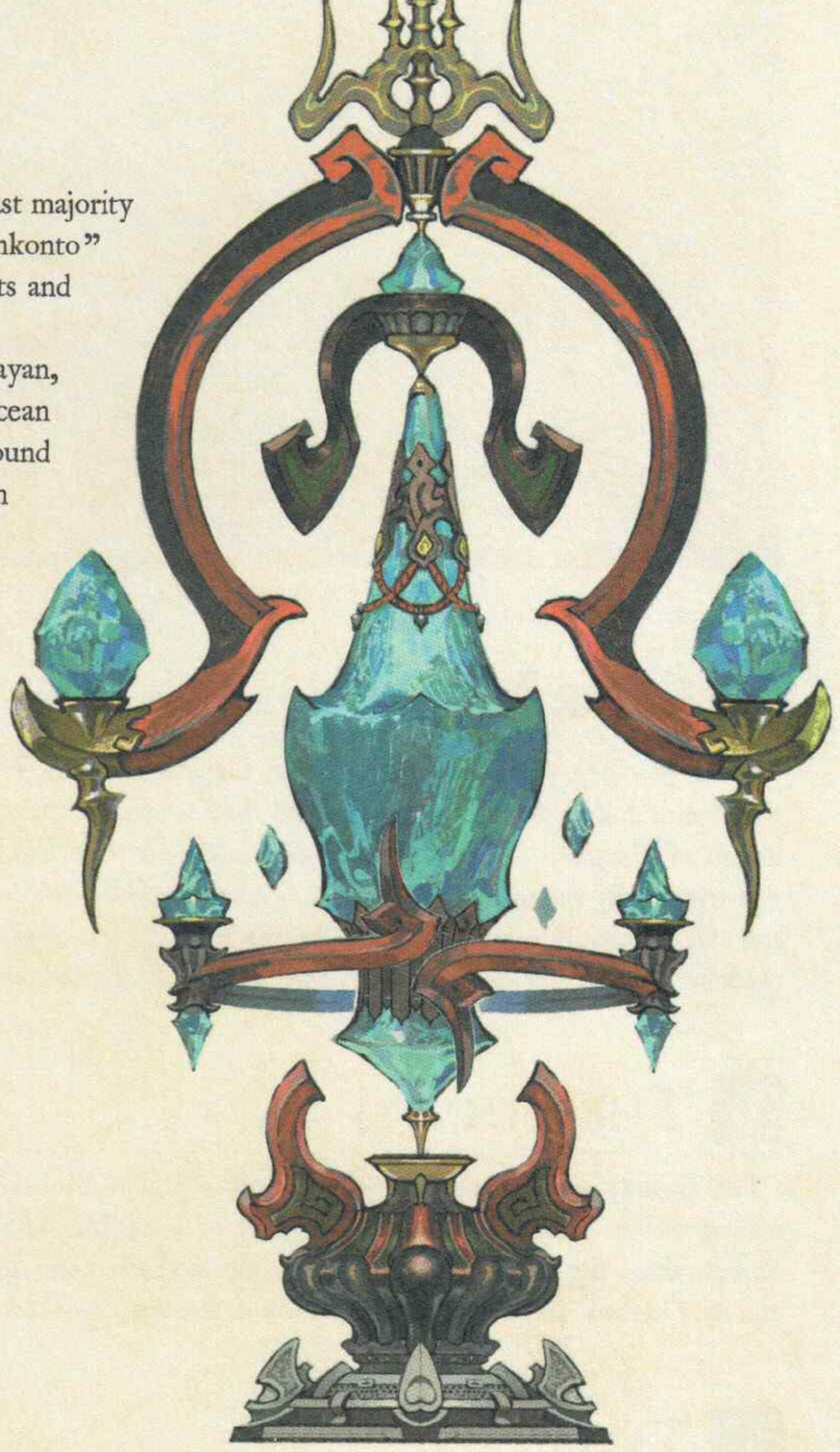
EASTERN CULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY

It is a simple fact that different lands give rise to different cultures and different technologies. But when civilizations meet, ideas are exchanged, and cultures spread beyond the crucible of their conception. Dig deep enough, and one might discover that seemingly independent advancements share a common root.

AETHERYTES AND TENKONTO

Aetherytes are arcane constructions which facilitate the use of teleportation magicks. The vast majority of aetherytes operating in Eorzea today were built by Sharlayan artisans, whereas the "Tenkonto" of the Far East were built by the Onishishu, a collective of skilled craftsmen. For all intents and purposes, a Tenkonto functions in almost the exact same fashion as an Eorzean aetheryte.

Professor Helblona Helblonawyn, a teacher of teleportation sorcery at the Studium in Sharlayan, attempts to answer the question of how two cultures separated by the vastness of the ocean managed to invent such similar contrivances. According to the professor's theory, the link is found in the expansion of ancient Allag. The design of Eorzea's aetherytes was originally based upon analysis of a dormant Allagan relic unearthed by the Studium in the 598th year of the Sixth Astral Era. And though the Onishishu's commitment to secrecy leaves much of its history the subject of conjecture, the collective is known to have guarded its techniques over the course of countless generations. Considering the Allagan Empire once occupied every corner of the Three Great Continents, it is not unthinkable that determined technologists could have silently preserved their culture's legacy, even as the pillars of learning were torn down during the Fourth Astral Era.



The scholars of the Studium unlocked the secrets of teleportation technology via analysis of a dormant Allagan device. More recently, academics have been excited to learn that an adventurer has discovered aetherytes of Allagan construction which appear to be fully functional.

Though there are differences in the style of the design, the Tenkonto built by the Onishishu are otherwise astonishingly similar to Eorzean and Allagan aetherytes with regards to its fundamental structure. The devices share many points of commonality, from the central crystal of exceptional clarity to the revolving aether stabilizers.

THE ONISHISHU

The artisans of the Onishishu pledge themselves to no nation, but neither do they seek to profit from this neutrality. In many respects, the organization more closely resembles a monastic order than a crafting guild. Just as a monk devotes herself to a god, the Onishi employ their skills in service to the people. And in return for providing valuable technology such as the Tenkonto, they ask but meager payment: a crate of foodstuffs; a token offering of coins. The Onishishu will, however, flatly refuse those who request its services if the sole objective is one of personal gain. One tale tells of an Onishi who bit off his own tongue in response to a powerful Hingan lord's demand for fealty. Even in the face of armed threats, history has proven the artisans' willingness to accept death rather than surrender their long-preserved secrets. It is this very reputation for fanaticism that has allowed the Onishishu to retain its uncompromising independence.

The traditional garb of an Onishi. Emblazoned with the unique design of their collective, the small "inro" the Onishi carry is said to grant them ingress to any gate in Hingashi—including the notoriously impassable doors of the palace.

Far Eastern Architecture

As is the case in Eorzea, architectural styles in the Far East change dramatically from region to region. Factors such as the availability of materials, the climate, and local custom all give rise to differences large and small.

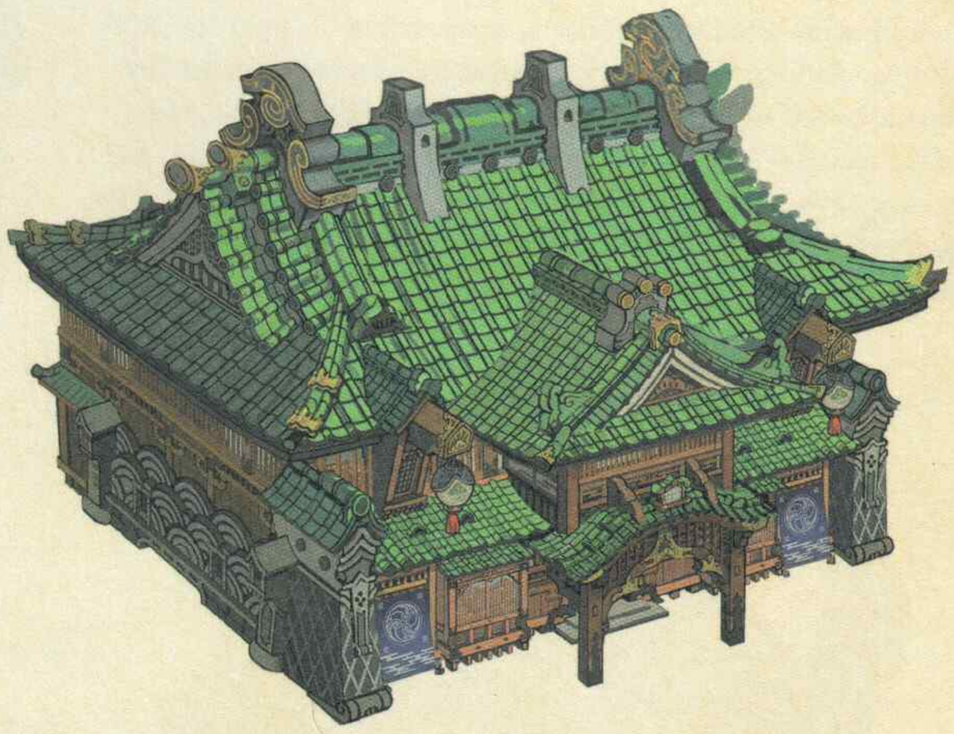
In Yanxia, Nagxia, and Hingashi, for instance, abundant sources of lumber have led to the construction of primarily wooden dwellings. The stone foundation is laid, posts and crossbeams are lodged in place, and the roof is secured—thatching is common in rural areas, whilst tiles are the norm in the city. Walls are built from clay, plaster, or wooden panels. High humidity contributes to a preference for well-ventilated structures, and interior walls are kept to a minimum. Eorzeans are incredulous to find that rooms are often divided with naught more than paper or cloth partitions. "Fusuma"—thin sliding doors—are one example of these fragile barriers, the lightweight materials chosen for their ability to retain moisture and ease humid conditions. Yet whilst the fundamental building techniques are all but identical in the aforementioned locales, there are numerous variations in decoration and design.

Farther southwest, in the searing desert air of Dalmasca, the inhabitants build mainly in stone. This preference is largely influenced by availability—wood has always been a scarce and precious resource on the sands, and the rock quarried from the nearby Skatay Range is well suited to construction. Dalmascan architecture is also noted for the vibrantly colored tiles used to decorate most every surface.

Stone is likewise used in the Azim Steppe for structures where a greater degree of permanence is desired. The Tail Mountains provide the main source of construction materials—a fine-quality stone which the native tribes have a long tradition of carving into statues. They developed an art by which these statues can be ensorcelled to serve, making possible the creation of truly immense edifices. For the majority of the nomadic locals, however, dwellings take the form of yurts. These simple tents might feature wooden poles for support, but are mainly constructed from sturdy felt or hide—materials which are easily folded and carried from place to place.

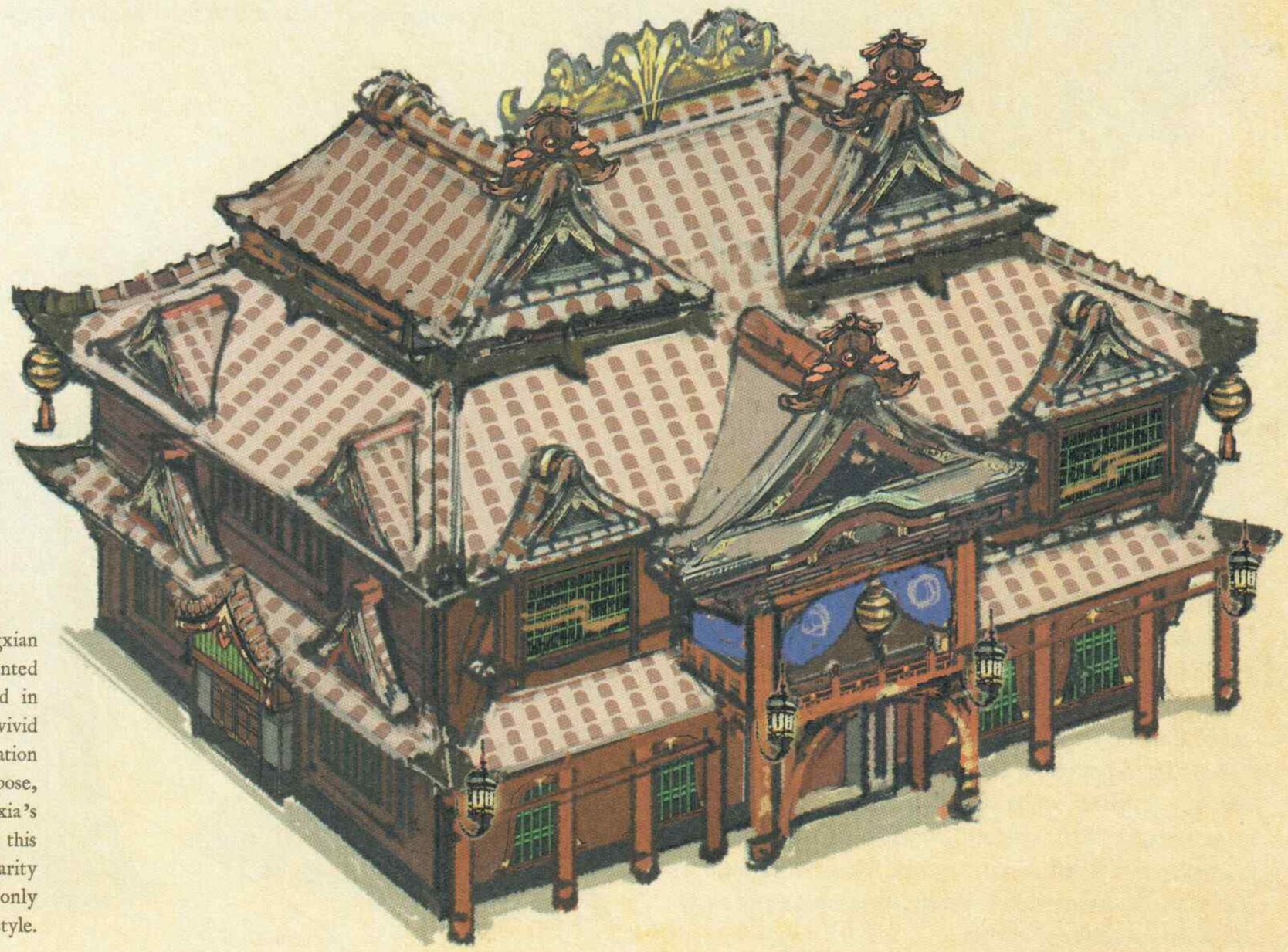
Yanxian Dwellings

Yanxia's buildings are awash with colors representative of various kinds of prosperity: red for offspring, green for land, and gold for coin. Circular arches and windows symbolic of the moon are also mainstays of Yanxian architecture.



Hingan Dwellings

With techniques learned on the continent forming the basis of Hingashi's architectural knowledge, Hingan houses are structurally similar to those of Yanxia. When it comes to appearance, however, the cylindrical towers and steeply curved roofs often seen in Yanxia are eschewed for a more angular aesthetic.



Nagxian Dwellings

The most notable feature of a Nagxian abode is the roof. Tiles are pigmented red with iron oxide and mortared in place with white plaster to create a vivid contrast in color. The liberal application of plaster also serves a practical purpose, holding the tiles in place during Nagxia's infamous typhoons. In recent years, this method of tiling has gained popularity in Hingashi, the technique commonly referred to as the "southern wind" style.

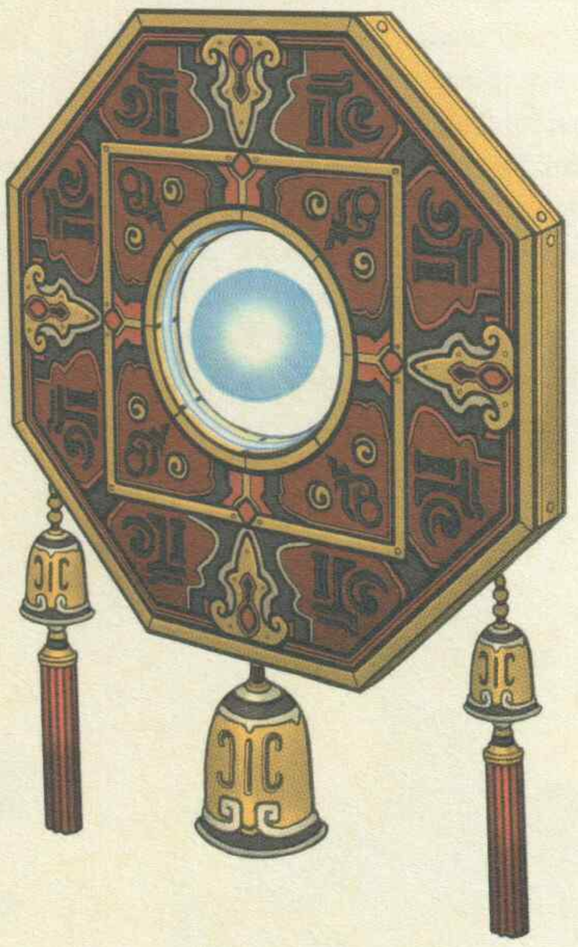
Far Eastern Magicks

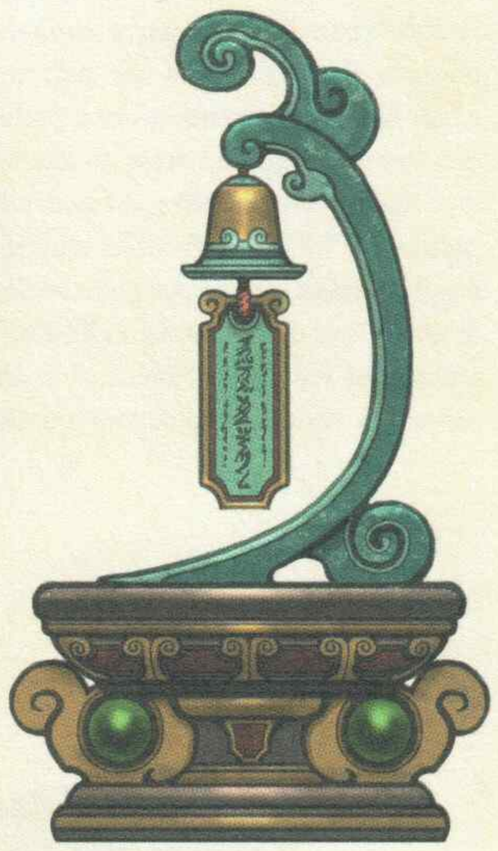
The art of the arcane features as prominently in the history of the Far East as it does in the annals of Eorzea. And just as Gridanian conjury differs from Ul'dahn thaumaturgy, the diverse magicks of these distant lands cannot be described as a single discipline. Eldritch secrets are closely guarded—such is the way of things—but a general understanding of the three main Far Eastern arts is not beyond the reach of an inquisitive mind.

Geomancy

Geomancy is an art wherein the practitioner delves into the currents of air, earth, and water, and combines their energies with his own to produce arcane phenomena. The discipline first arose in Yanxia, its secrets passed on from aged master to chosen student in the traditional manner. This restrictive method of succession continued for generations until Ganen, the founding father of Doma and a famous geomancer in his own right, opened a temple to teach the masses and thus brought his knowledge to the attention of the wider world.

With regards to the mastery it grants over wind, earth, and water, as well as its affinity for barriers, geomancy is thought to share many similarities with conjury. Scholars have also pointed out how certain aspects of the art have a kinship with Sharlayan astrology. In the nation of Hingashi, however, the geomancer's banishing and binding of evil has been misconstrued as a means to manipulate the land and invite good fortune, leading the populace to consider these mages as little more than advisors for aspiring merchants.





Onmyojutsu

A unique art conceived in the land of Hingashi, onmyojutsu exhibits aspects of both thaumaturgy and divination. For the onmyoji, all in nature are born of either light or shadow, and it is in controlling the movement or balance between the two that arcane power is made manifest. This concept is thought to resemble the philosophy of polarity which exists in Eorzea, wherein the aetheric scales can tip in either an astral or umbral direction.

Symbolic of light and shadow, the discipline features many spells of fire and ice, with lightning magicks representing the energies which lurch between the two extremes. Onmyoji are also known for conjuring "shikigami" and binding them to golem-like servants crafted from wood or clay.

Eldritch Secrets of the Au Ra

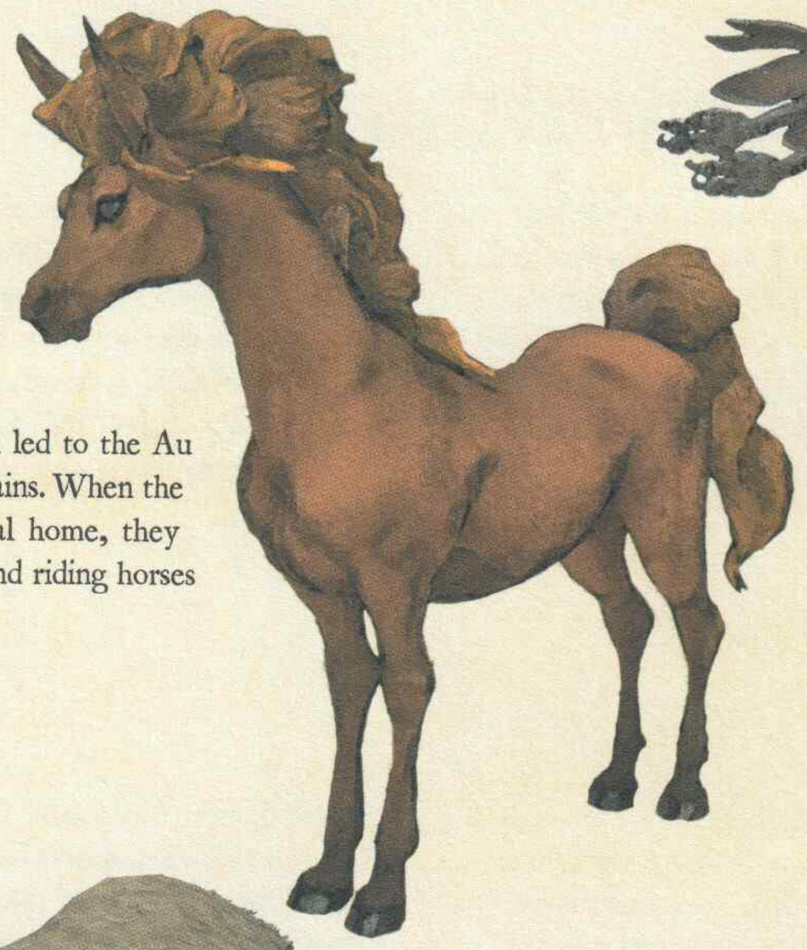
Among the Xaela of the Azim Steppe, there is a multitude of tribes who have preserved the ways of ancient magicks. In typical Xaela fashion, the manner of their teaching, not to mention the content of the lesson itself, varies wildly from tribe to tribe. There are shamans who claim to hear the voices of the gods themselves, while yet others boast the ability to see into the future.

Whilst research into these magicks of eld has progressed but little, a respected aetherologist has documented instances of other phenomena—blasts of fire, curative touches, and the like—which prove the Xaela capable of casting the equivalent of most rudimentary spells. Distinct amongst their knowledge, however, is a rite wherein patterns engraved into specially prepared stone result in a biddable golem. These stone faces, or "khun chuluu" in the Xaela's native tongue, can serve as a focus which amplifies arcane energies, enabling the manifestation of falling comets and other such spells of devastation and ruin.

Far Eastern Livestock

Livestock plays a major role in the development of civilizations, and exerts significant influence over a people's culture and way of life. Beasts of burden are essential for their part in hauling heavy loads, providing a means of transport, and assisting with agricultural and building tasks. These larger animals are also a vital source of milk and meat, as well as providing useful materials such as hide and bone. The following is a selection of livestock of primary importance in the lands of the Far East.

Horse



Among the peoples of the Far East, it is believed that the Au Ra of the Azim Steppe were the first to keep livestock. They initially tamed horses to serve as mounts, and it was this achievement which led to the Au Ra's decisive rise to dominance over the plains. When the Raen subsequently departed their ancestral home, they took with them the knowledge of rearing and riding horses to the lands beyond the Steppe.

Falcon

The falcons spoken of in the Far East are of a gigantic breed, capable of bearing a full-grown man through the air. The training of a falcon, which must be hand-raised to serve as a mount from the moment it hatches until it reaches maturity, is a lengthy and involved process. As such, it is common in Hingashi that only a house sponsored by an influential lord will have the resources to undertake falcon rearing as the family business. Fully trained birds are purchased for a heavy purse, with many spending their lives flying the routes of a falcon porter.

Dzo

Stocky, four-legged beasts native to the Azim Steppe, the long-haired dzos are a source of warm pelts, rich milk, and large quantities of meat. Dzos are also known for their lumbering strength, and are often employed to pull carts and wagons. Generally passive in temperament, they respond poorly to the switch or called commands, but the nomadic Xaela have nevertheless grown to rely upon these animals to haul around their tents and other bulky camp utensils.

Sheep

As is the case in many parts of the world, sheep are counted amongst the more common types of livestock in the Far East. Ill suited as mounts or beasts of burden, the true value of a sheep is found in its wool—an indispensable material in the creation of warm clothing and yurt coverings. These animals are also kept for their meat and milk.

Yol

After the horse, the Au Ra turned their hand to taming the yol, and these new mounts saw them expand their dominion to the skies above the Steppe. Breaking the spirit of these bellicose birds of prey, however, is not a task for the faint of heart nor weak of arm. In fact, it was the very danger inherent in this feat which prompted many Xaela tribes to incorporate yol-taming into their rites of passage—furthering the evolution of their merit-based society.

FAR EASTERN FAITHS

In her signature work, *Far Eastern Trails*, travel writer extraordinaire Liliju Liju has a section devoted to the region's "magnificent and multifarious kami, as uncountable as the stars in the sky." No single volume could possibly encapsulate the mercurial definitions of every known Far Eastern divinity, and thus do such authors often choose to focus on the more prominent examples.

A Pantheon of Multitudes

"Kami"—the word for "god" in the Far East—has a significantly broader definition than the equivalent term in Eorzean. Similar to Eorzea's Twelve, there exist celestial entities who preside over the sun or moon, but there are also sacred mountains and rivers, as well as exceptionally long-lived flora and fauna that have attained the status of godhood. Great leaders deified in the afterlife, objects infused with divine spirits, and even certain creatures of supernatural proportions all qualify to join the ranks of the kami.

Proponents of different faiths are largely tolerant of each other's deities, and often afford the same level of respect to every kami. It is not unheard of for Easterners to assimilate the mythology of a foreign god should they perceive the entity in question sufficiently similar to their own deity. This open-minded approach to faith has resulted in a pantheon of kami with multiple origins, and caused the hand-wringing of many a Western theologian attempting to define this nebulous system of belief.

Heavenly Gods

The amatsukami are those divine beings who descended from the heavens in some long-forgotten era to dwell in the mortal realm. One version of their tale portrays the kami making their way downwards through Heaven-on-High—the staggeringly tall spire found on the island of Onokoro. Many are the names of the kami which are spoken in the Far East, but perhaps the most esteemed of these belong to the three greater deities: Amaterasu, God of the Sun; Tsukuyomi, Lady of the Moon; and Susano, Lord of the Revel. All of these entities are considered amatsukami, yet due to the local variations in myth and legend, it is difficult to be certain of their genders, let alone settle upon a definitive depiction for any one of them.

Though Susano is a prominent presence even amongst the amatsukami, there exist myriad interpretations of the entity itself. The Kojin, for example, believe the Lord of the Revel to be a "tsukumogami" whose essence is divided between several sacred receptacles—a belief which was borne out when three potent relics were gathered together to summon a primal incarnation. Y'shtola of the Scions of the Seventh Dawn insists, however, that the primal should be considered nothing more than a faith-fueled manifestation of the Kojin's own conception of Susano, as opposed to definitive proof of the kami's true nature.

Divinity in a Bottle

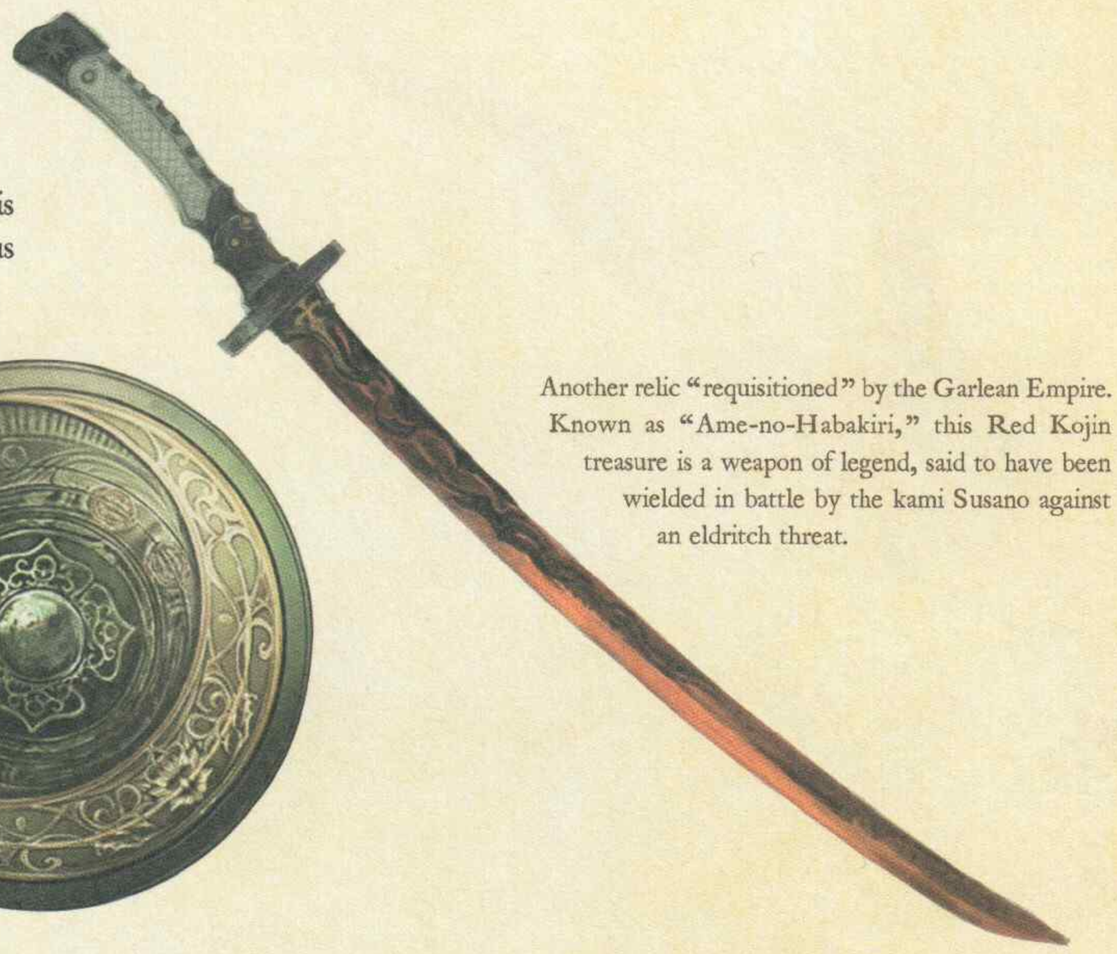
Tsukumogami are man-made objects such as tools or weapons which have acquired a divine spirit over the course of decades. The word "tsukumo" can be transcribed with the Hingan characters for "ninety-nine" and represents a period of time just shy of a century. This is not to imply, however, that every object that survives for this duration will find itself ennobled with the presence of a tsukumogami. The tales which surround these relics speak of exceptional pieces of art or workmanship, or describe the transference of remarkable will from a wielder or maker, whilst the "ninety-nine"—far from being an accurate count of years—is merely a poetic substitute for a significant passage of time.

Just as ambiguous is what constitutes evidence of a tsukumogami manifestation. Some writings describe an object changing position overnight without outside agency, while others point to preternatural fortune visiting those who come into possession of a specific treasure. The more tangible examples on record include dolls which begin moving of their own accord, or even speaking out loud in front of onlookers. But even such "proof" does not necessarily confirm the authenticity of a receptacle. As long as its qualities are not attributed to a curse, an antique suspected of harboring a divine presence has its value increased exponentially. As such, there is no shortage of unscrupulous merchants willing to deceive customers with cleverly prepared fakes—objects containing hidden mechanisms designed to simulate the presence of a tsukumogami.

The Kojin believe that an aged doll made by an unknown crafter has become the receptacle for a tsukumogami. Following this revelation, they have begun crafting and selling wind-up imitations of this now-sacred object. Whether this industry springs from a desire for profit or is simply an unusual display of piety is not entirely clear.

Relics

Relics such as those collected by the Kojin include receptacles for divine spirits, or objects that have otherwise been infused with divine power. Contrary to a tsukumogami's receptacle, a relic blessed with the sacred energies of an amatsukami or similar entity is considered a tool to be used rather than worshipped. This category of relic is often incorporated into rites and rituals as a focus for manifesting arcane phenomena.



Another relic "requisitioned" by the Garlean Empire. Known as "Ame-no-Habakiri," this Red Kojin treasure is a weapon of legend, said to have been wielded in battle by the kami Susano against an eldritch threat.

Crafted from nickel, this ancient mirror is believed to hold the energies of Tsukuyomi, deity of night and the moon. The Red Kojin surrendered this treasured relic to the Garlean Empire, and the object later served as the ritual focus in a primal summoning.

Auspices

An integral part of Far Eastern folklore since ancient times, an auspice is an animal that has ascended to godhood. Legends tell of birds and beasts which, having outlived their ordinary lifespan by decades, attain a sense of self. Over the course of a thousand years, such creatures gradually amass a mystical strength, until one day they awaken to powers of divine magnitude. Auspices are considered deities in their own right, as awe-inspiring and respected as any of the kami.

These ascended animals are, however, plagued by a dual nature. When the boundless calm—the nigimitama—comes to the fore, an auspice often serves as a benevolent guardian, protecting the people from malicious entities. But when the primal rage—the aramitama—takes over, the auspice runs wild, wreaking disasters of divine proportions. Many a folktale and minstrel's verse is the recounting of a heroic effort made to contain these rampaging beings.

Famous Foxes

Amongst the auspices' number, the most commonly witnessed, and thus most frequently recorded in legend, are those of the fox family. It is common for foxes that have endured for a century or more to gain the ability to shapeshift, and they often take the form of a person when wandering in populated lands. There are even tales of a fully ascended vulpine auspice who transformed into a woman of surpassing beauty. She is said to have gained the favor of a nation's sovereign, and enjoyed every luxury that the royal life had to offer.

But for every tale of harmless amusement, there is a story of a raging beast whose fangs dripped red with the blood of men. The most famous of these, perhaps, speaks of Kinko Kugane, an auspice whose territory spanned the southern reaches of Shishu. When Kinko encountered workers felling ancient trees as they prepared the way for the growing port town, she surrendered her spirit to the fury of the aramitama. Records describe how her victims fell in droves before her corporeal form was finally slain. It was a geomancer by the name of Kazan, however, who was called to soothe Kinko's uncontrollable spirit. He erected a barrier anchored at four shrines around Kugane, trapping the fox auspice and containing her power.

A vulpine entity possessed of nine tails, Tamamo Gozen is Yanxia's most well-known auspice. She was once considered the guardian of Doma, and fought valiantly to repel Garlemald's forces during the Empire's invasion. Sadly, the wounds she sustained during the conflict addled her mind, and the fox is said to now wander the land in a state of dangerous confusion.

Nature Worship

Daitenzan, the highest peak on the Hingashi archipelago, is revered by the locals as a snow-crowned kami. Far from being an unusual practice in eastern regions, the number of mountains, rivers, and other natural features believed to host divine spirits is beyond counting. One need only look to the plethora of shrines built and seasonal festivals held in every village to see evidence of the people's devout worship of nature.

Mortal Gods

There are instances of men and women, powerful or influential in life, who ascend to godhood after death. As is true for many kami, however, the path by which they arrive at this status is not always the same. There are those whose mortal deeds were recognized by higher powers, their souls invited into heaven and granted divine station; still others refuse to move on to the afterlife, some great purpose binding them to the earth and empowering their spirit. This last example is especially prevalent when the cause of death was untimely or violent, as in the tale of a murdered general whose vengeful specter stalked and slaughtered every last person associated with his demise. Sharlayan researchers question claims of divine ascendancy in such circumstances, suggesting that many of these once-mortal "kami" would be more accurately classified as undead spirits in Eorzea.

Ganen, the first king of Doma, is prominent amongst those mortals deified in the afterlife. Known for uniting the warring factions of Yanxia and bringing peace to the region, this famous commander was enshrined in a tomb befitting his accomplishments. Over time, people came to worship Ganen's eternal spirit as a kami of martial and scholarly learning.

Steppe Parents

Amongst the myriad faiths of the Far East, the mythology of the Azim Steppe nomads is especially vibrant. In an epic tale yet told on the grasslands with unwavering piety, the central figures of Azim, the Father of the Dawn, and Nhaama, Mother of the Dusk, are attributed with the creation of the world, as well as the Au Ra who dwell upon it.

The most prevalent version of the story holds that Azim and Nhaama joined hands to bring the world into existence, but fell to feuding over who commanded dominion over their creation. A drawn-out war brought no victor, and thus did they fashion the race of the Au Ra to battle in their stead—a male wrought for the glory of the sun god, and a female shaped to triumph in the moon goddess's name. Yet even as the conflict raged, the seed of love grew and blossomed upon the field. The children born of this union stirred the hearts of both Azim and Nhaama, moving them to yield the Steppe to the Au Ra and thence return to their place in the heavens. Ever after, the man and woman of this tale were known as the Dawn Father and the Dusk Mother—the progenitors of the Auri people.

Whilst this remains a common retelling, the individual tribes of the Xaela—competitive in all things—maintain their own variations of the tale. The Oronir, for example, are taught that they are all the direct descendants of Azim, a belief that remains unshaken to this day.

The relief carved into the side of the Dawn Throne is said to capture the likeness of the Dawn Father of legend. Even now, his gaze falls upon the Steppe, witnessing the furious contests of his progeny.

An imposing sculpture of the Dusk Mother, as she appeared in the time of myth. These days the monument lies half-buried on the northern edge of Nhaama's Retreat, its features worn down by years of windblown sand.

EORZEAN FAITHS

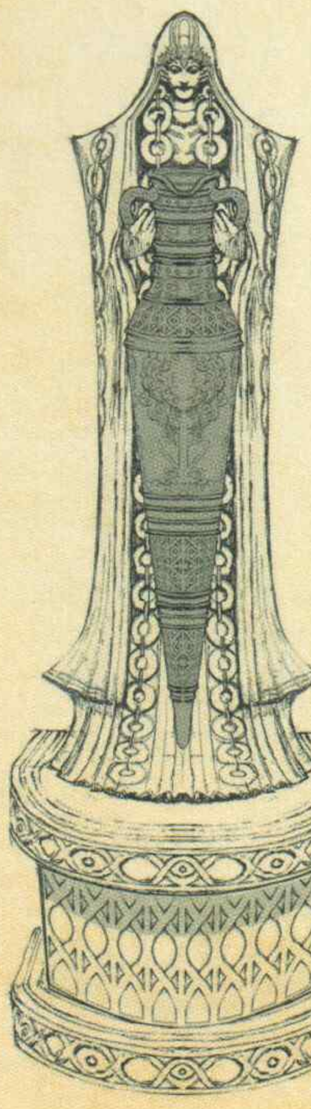
With the diverse tenets of Far Eastern religion freshly imprinted upon one's mind, one may wish to reexamine the faiths of Eorzea, and indulge in a study of comparative mythology. Such academic exercises can often lead to the discovery of commonalities between cultures that might otherwise be overlooked.

Religious Institutions

Eorzeans worship a pantheon of gods known as the Twelve, and it is customary for individuals to choose a singular patron deity whom they revere above all others. This decision is generally influenced by the divinity's association with a number of key factors, including a person's origin (homeland, race, or clan), nameday and other special dates, or the nature of one's occupation or calling in life.

Even as each of the major city-states is identified by its chosen patron deity, one can also encounter sizable religious institutions founded upon a more dedicated form of worship. The dragon-besieged city of Ishgard, for example, adopted Halone not only as its guardian goddess, but also installed her as the central figure of the Ishgardian Orthodox Church—the nation's official religion. The following sections provide an in-depth look at the history and doctrine of several present-day organizations which maintain a significant number of devotees.

Although the people of Gridania have taken Nophica, The Matron, as their goddess, no definitive organization has ever been founded upon Her worship. This is due in large part to the unique relationship the nation has with the Twelveswood's enigmatic elementals, and the near-religious faith Gridanian society places in the mediations of the Elder Seedseer and her Hearers.



The Order of Nald'thal

At the head of what is the primary religion of Ul'dah for all practical purposes, the Order of Nald'thal is an organization devoted to the god of commerce and overseer of the underworld. Nald'thal is traditionally depicted as either a single god of dual aspect, or as twin deities, but it is this latter interpretation that the Order has embraced, encouraging the worship of Nald and Thal as distinct entities.

According to the Order's teachings, the twin Traders each preside over their own domain: Nald, the world of the living; and Thal, the halls of the dead. Milvaneth Sacrarium, the temple of Nald, is crowded with pious merchants seeking to curry favor and fortune in this lifetime. Conversely, the Arrzaneth Ossuary, temple of Thal, is most popular with the destitute and the downtrodden, who pray for wealth in the realm of death. As might be expected, the afterlife is a central pillar in the Order of Nald'thal's system of belief.

The Arrzaneth Ossuary is also responsible for performing funerary rites, and it is through the destructive dweomers employed to prepare the dead that its priests perfected the art of thaumaturgy. It is common knowledge that the foundation for these magicks was laid in the long-sundered city of Belah'dia, the eldritch roots of which can be further traced back to the ancient civilization of Mhach. It is also well documented, however, that Belah'dia's guardian deity was Azeyma, keeper of the sun, providing stark evidence that the path of arcane and religious legacies need not always converge.

With an eye to preserving Ul'dah's wealth, the learned priests of the Order have long served the royal family in the capacity of lawmakers and administrators. In this privileged position they are often approached by merchant princes and the like who scheme to sway legislation in their favor with ostentatious offerings of coin. Such secular dealings earn the scorn of the more spiritually-minded members of the clergy, but Prioress Dewlala, with her seat secure on the Syndicate, shows no sign of relinquishing either her or her organization's worldly authority.

The Ishgardian Orthodox Church

The Ishgardian Orthodox Church is the dominant religion of Ishgard, and the archbishop, the church's elected leader, has also traditionally served as the nation's head of state. Once an institution of undisputed authority, the tumultuous culmination of the Dragonsong War exposed deceptions woven throughout church-sanctioned history, leaving the clergy reeling in the aftermath of the damning revelations.

According to scripture, the Ishgardian Orthodox Church was founded in the 545th year of the Sixth Astral Era by its first archbishop, a man later canonized as Saint Reymanaud. In an announcement made by Ser Aymeric de Borel, lord commander of the Temple Knights and speaker of the House of Lords, that date was revealed to be false—with a true history marking the church's establishment at over one-hundred and fifty years prior. It was roughly around the year 360 when the Elezen, forced north into Abalathia's Spine by Hyuran expansion, began the standardization of their faith with the construction of a temple to Halone in the highlands of Coerthas. The settlers' decision to adopt the Fury as a patron deity was likely influenced to no small degree by the ever-present threat of hostile dragons. A decade later, however, the tragedy of Saint Shiva and the great wyrm Hraesvelgr prompted a truce between Elezen and dragon, and for the next several generations, the church's teachings centered upon the principles of peaceful coexistence.

This harmony was shattered in the year 545 with King Thordan's heinous betrayal of the First Brood, and his subsequent death. Bereft of a monarch, the remaining knights twelve—the forefathers of the four High Houses—colluded with the high-ranking clergy to elevate Reymanaud to the position of archbishop, and confer upon him the powers of the throne. They then proceeded to fabricate and disseminate a history which concealed the wrongdoings of the past, and supported the creation of the type of bureaucracy necessary to govern a nation at constant war. Ultimately, the corruption of the faith's core precepts was simply a means to paint the Dravanians as villains, and lend a holy legitimacy to the atrocities of the Dragonsong War—justice and morality played no part in its evolution. These truths have summoned forth a storm of reprisals, and sweeping reform is taking place under the newly established government. Adherents are seeking to restructure the Holy See and reevaluate its teachings to bring the Ishgardian Orthodox Church back to its roots.

Bearing the name of the church's inaugural archbishop, Saint Reymanaud's Cathedral is said to have been built on a base of the very stone used in the construction of Ishgard's founding temple to Halone. With every facet of the *Enchiridion* now called into question, however, the veracity of this statement is the subject of much debate.

Orthodox cathedrals are not considered complete without at least one towering statue of Halone, girt for battle. Gallant warriors who fell in the holy war against the Dravanians were believed to enter the gates of the Fury's palace, and receive warm welcome in Her icy halls.

Rhalgr's Reach was constructed at the base of the Temple of the Fist, and is believed to have been graced by the presence of the Destroyer Himself—thus marking it as a favored training ground for monks. The site remained a blackened ruin for long years following the execution of the mad king's murderous orders, but now serves as a stronghold for the Ala Mhigan Resistance.

The Fist of Rhalgr

When the lands of Eorzea were drowned by the Sixth Umbral Calamity, some survived by following the trail of a blazing comet into the mountains of Gyr Abania. Believing Rhalgr sent His beacon to deliver them from death, these refugees were overcome with gratitude, and henceforth the breaker of worlds became their patron god and savior. Their united faith would eventually splinter into several factions, the largest of which was the "Fist of Rhalgr." The unforgiving nature of life in the peaks encouraged the spread of their teachings—devotees trained mind and body to grow closer to the Destroyer's perfection, granting them the fortitude to survive no matter how brutal the struggle. This fervent conditioning also served Rhalgr's disciples well against the region's savage predators, and produced hardened soldiers for the mercenary trade.

Following a path of meditation and physical discipline, the adherents of the Fist of Rhalgr cultivated unique martial techniques, and forged themselves into a veritable army of warrior monks. And as their ranks swelled, so too did their presence, until eventually their influence on Gyr Abanian society grew too strong to be ignored. Instead of attempting to quell this rising power, however, the royal family of Ala Mhigo chose to enfold it into the nation's own forces. The Fist's religion became Ala Mhigo's religion, and in return for the official recognition of their faith, the monks were bound to answer when turmoil threatened the state.

This relationship continued to the benefit of both parties for a time, but came to an abrupt and tragic end during the reign of the mad king Theodoric. The Fist's outspoken elders were as a nettle in Theodoric's side, and so the monarch proclaimed his authority the divine will of Nymeia, She who stands above Rhalgr. Predictably, the monks balked at Theodoric's demands to venerate his royal person. As if on cue, the king's soldiers proceeded to arrest every elder on grounds of treason, subjecting them to torture until they confessed to plans to abolish the throne. The prisoners were later executed for their "crimes," and in the year 1552, Theodoric sent his forces to raze the Temple of the Fist and slaughter all who worshipped within. The monks were massacred in blood and fire, their order left a smoking ruin—yet in recent years, there has been news that a self-professed survivor has returned to Gyr Abania, and is even now rebuilding the lost glory of the Fist of Rhalgr.

Rhalgr is often depicted as a magus bearing a staff of bronze, and this appearance—coupled with his command over lightning—has seen scholars conflate the deity with Ramuh, the god of the sylphs. The theory claims that they are each aspects of the same ancient being, and that it is only the legends passed down by the different races that have given rise to the perception of two distinct deities.

Missionary Men

Though common worship of the Twelve has, without much aid, spread to the far corners of Eorzea, there are certain sects that have put forth tremendous effort to bolster their respective flocks. One historically has been the Church of Saint Zozonan the Shepherd which, during the early years of the 13th and 14th centuries of the Sixth Astral Era, funded countless missionary expeditions into the more remote areas of Aldenard and beyond. While these voyages would ultimately help to expand the borders of the day's maps, the danger involved saw more than two of every three crews lost. The following is the record of one such tragic mission.

Day 1

Our humble flock departed from Vesper Bay today on the Wind Walker—a ship of two masts, complete with a crew of thirty. The captain tells me that should the winds remain favorable, the journey to the Mazlaya Bay will take no more than eight days and we will have landed on the Pearl before the new moon.

Day 3

My brothers and I are having a difficult time convincing the crew to join us in prayer. They are a ragged lot who seem more intent on gambling and telling tales of their exploits on Limsa's pleasure boats than praying to the gods who will keep this ship afloat. My faith is ever unwavering, but I cannot help but begin to question the necessity of spreading teachings of the Twelve when legions of unbelievers remain in our midst.

Day 4

For three days and nights our ship has sailed along the featureless Thanalan coast, finally reaching the promontory—Cape Deadwind—which marks Eorzea's southernmost point on the morning of the fourth. The great Sagolii Desert which has consumed the land beyond Vl'dah is an utter void of desolation. We saw not man nor beast nor tree nor shrub for the entirety of our journey. Surely the men who once lived there (and historians would have us believe the land was once populated) must have given great offense to the gods for them to lay the land so low. The captain has pointed us due east, and I am glad to see this terrible land behind us.

Day 6

After making excellent time riding the northerly winds gusting down from the Strait of Merlthor, we set our course east, and since that very moment the wind has refused to blow. The captain calls them the doldrums and says there is nothing to do but wait them out. The crew does not seem in any way concerned, and spend day and night drinking rum and tossing dice. My brothers and I continue our prayers alone below decks for it is all we are able.

Day 10

Still no sign of the winds picking up. The dinghy which was cast off two mornings past with four men to explore the coast for a river or spring has yet to return and is feared lost, or worse, abandoned. The stores of fresh food and animals have all been consumed and now the captain has begun rationing out the worm-infested hard tack and salt pork. On a positive note, seven members of the crew have begun attending our sermons.

Day 16

The water ran out today, forcing us to turn to the ever-plentiful barrels of rum stored in the ship's hold. Though it does not take a sailor to know that the rum will just heighten our thirst and drive us to madness all the swifter. The captain had to hang two men who had been plotting a mutiny...as if a mutiny could somehow summon winds from the skies.

Day 20

Two days since the last drop of rum was drunk. Despite the captain's pleas, nearly half the remaining crew has jumped ship and attempted the over three-league swim to shore. The ones we witnessed dragged under by sharks will have most likely found a better end than the ones who actually make landfall. For them slow death in an endless desert is all that awaits. We will continue to pray.

Day 24?

How I have survived this long,
I do not know. To slake my thirst
I have done the unthinkable—
I have partaken of the very blood of a man
who slit his own throat.
Or was it I who slit his throat?
Will the Twelve
forgive me?
Or have they forsaken us?
Does it even matter?

The Lambs of Dalamud

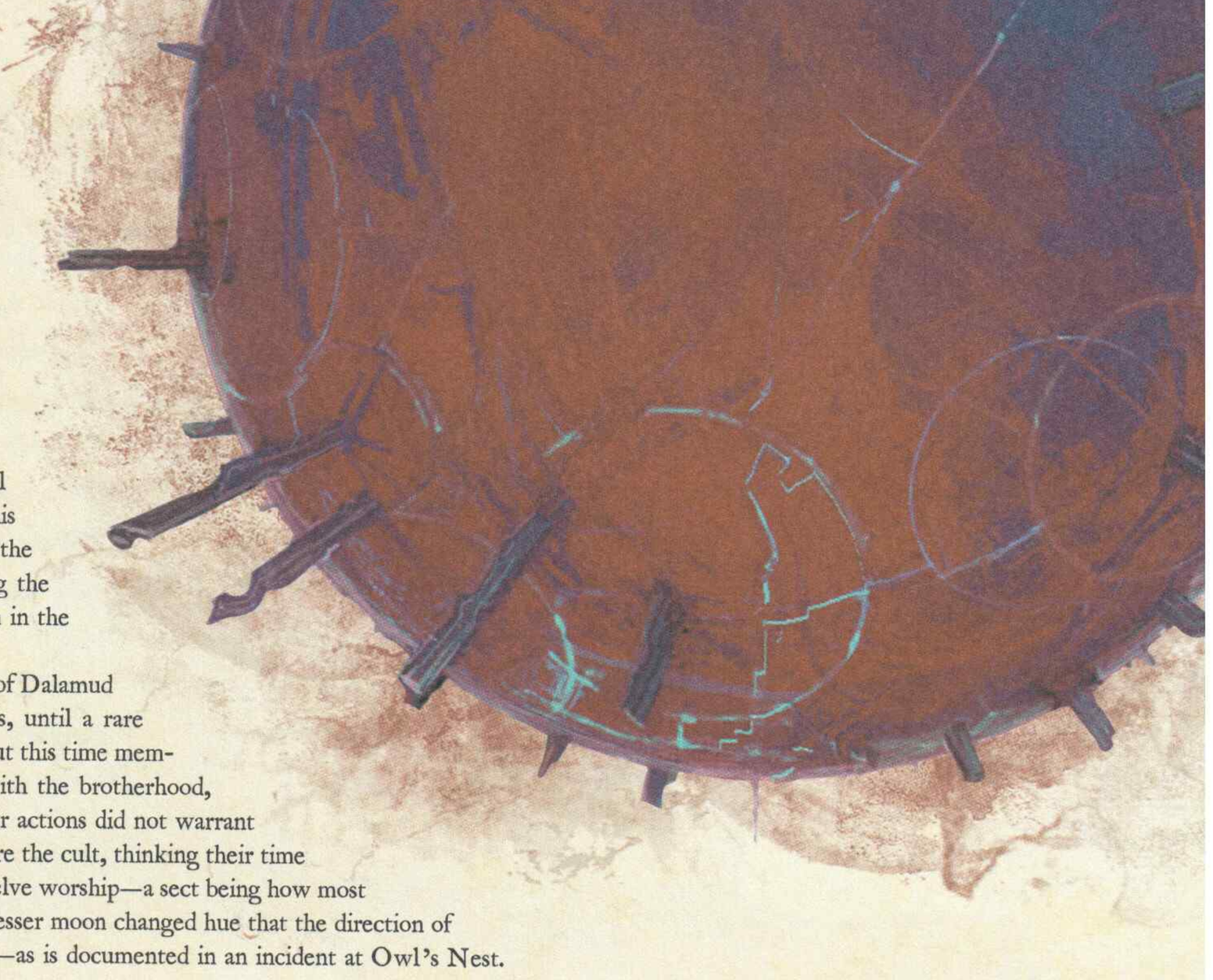
In the throes of the sixth, and feared-to-be-final sun, fear and uncertainty reigned supreme. While most struggled to simply find the will to endure, some endeavored to take advantage of the waxing confusion. The most common beneficiaries of this chaos were bandits and brigands who lined their pockets to bursting with ill-gotten coin. There were others, however, who sought a different prize—blood—and were not above treachery and deceit to fulfill their desires. Tales abound of hapless adventurers who found themselves unwitting participants in enterprises most foul, pawns to the dark hands that moved them about the board. The Lambs of Dalamud were one such consociation.

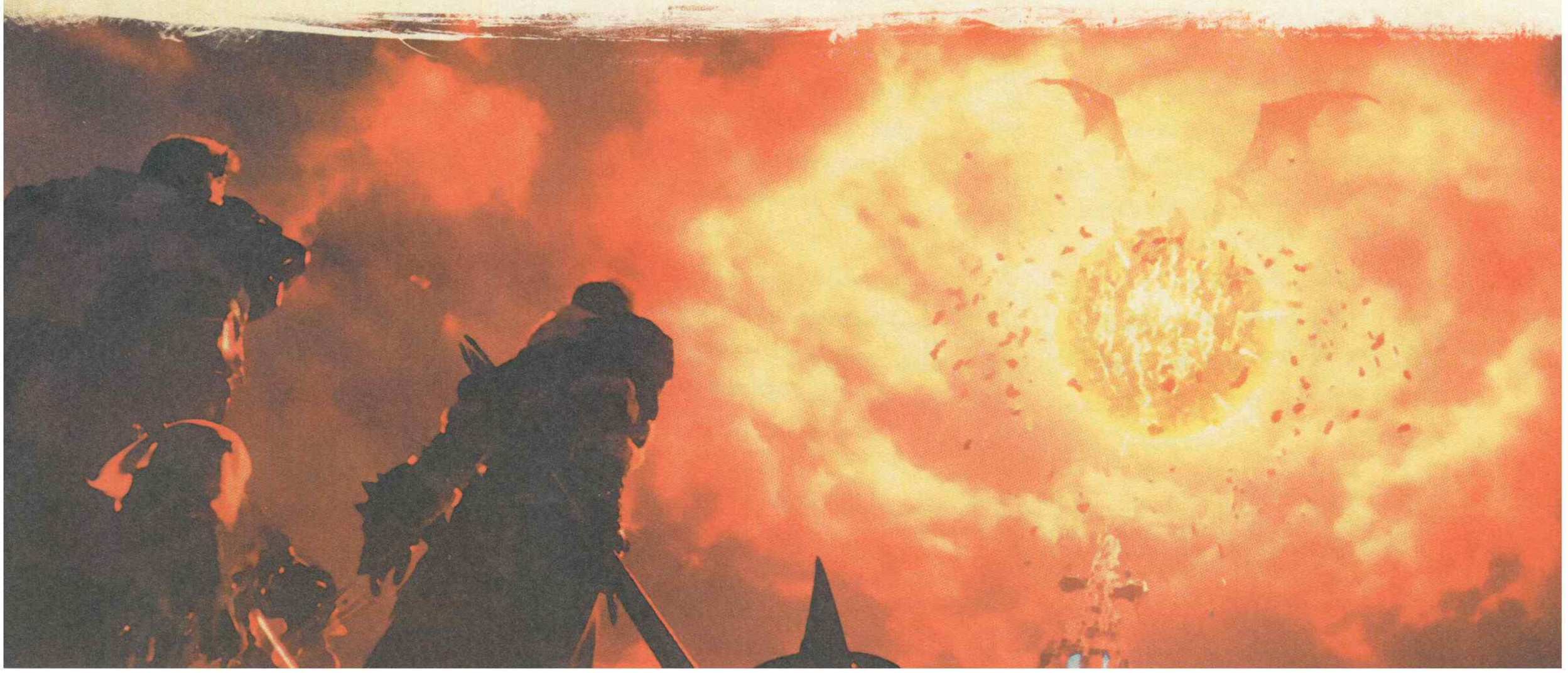
Seeds Most Dark

There is much speculation as to the true origins of the Lambs. Most believe their inception recent—perhaps as an attempt to find answers for the pandemonium that slowly unfolded in the final twenty summers of the Sixth Astral Era. Others better versed in imperial sociopolitics claim the cult a strategic plant by the Garleans—more specifically the VIIth Legion and Nael van Darnus—to slowly foster chaos in Eorzea while the Empire regrouped following their defeat at Silvertear Falls. And then there are still some who point back further, citing the infamous "lost" 4th Astral Era—a time when vague recollections of the Allagans' technical marvel overlapped with a re-embracing of religion would have proven the perfect sod for a lunar cult to take root and thrive. History is rife with records of ancient peoples who looked to the moon for guidance, the vestiges of those beliefs ever apparent in modern religion, most notably in the portrayal of Menphina, the Lover. While the name "Lambs of Dalamud" does not appear in any scholarly work older than the Sharlayan exodus, it may not be unreasonable to assume that they have mayhap existed, in some capacity, for countless millennia. This theory is further substantiated by the name Dalamud itself, a word whose linguistic origin appears to have been derived from Bahamut—the selfsame primal recently revealed to have been captured and exiled to the heavens by Allagans some five thousand summers previous.

Lambs doctrine teaches that Dalamud—loyal hound to the moon, Menphina—would one day heed the summons of His Flock and return to the Land to wreak havoc on the unfaithful. Only those who had proven their loyalty in life would be spared and led to their rightful place amongst the stars. It was commonly believed that this loyalty was best demonstrated through self-sacrifice in the upholding of their belief, and that the Hound, knowing the scent of His true followers, would come to collect them in the Seven Hells for the journey heavensward.

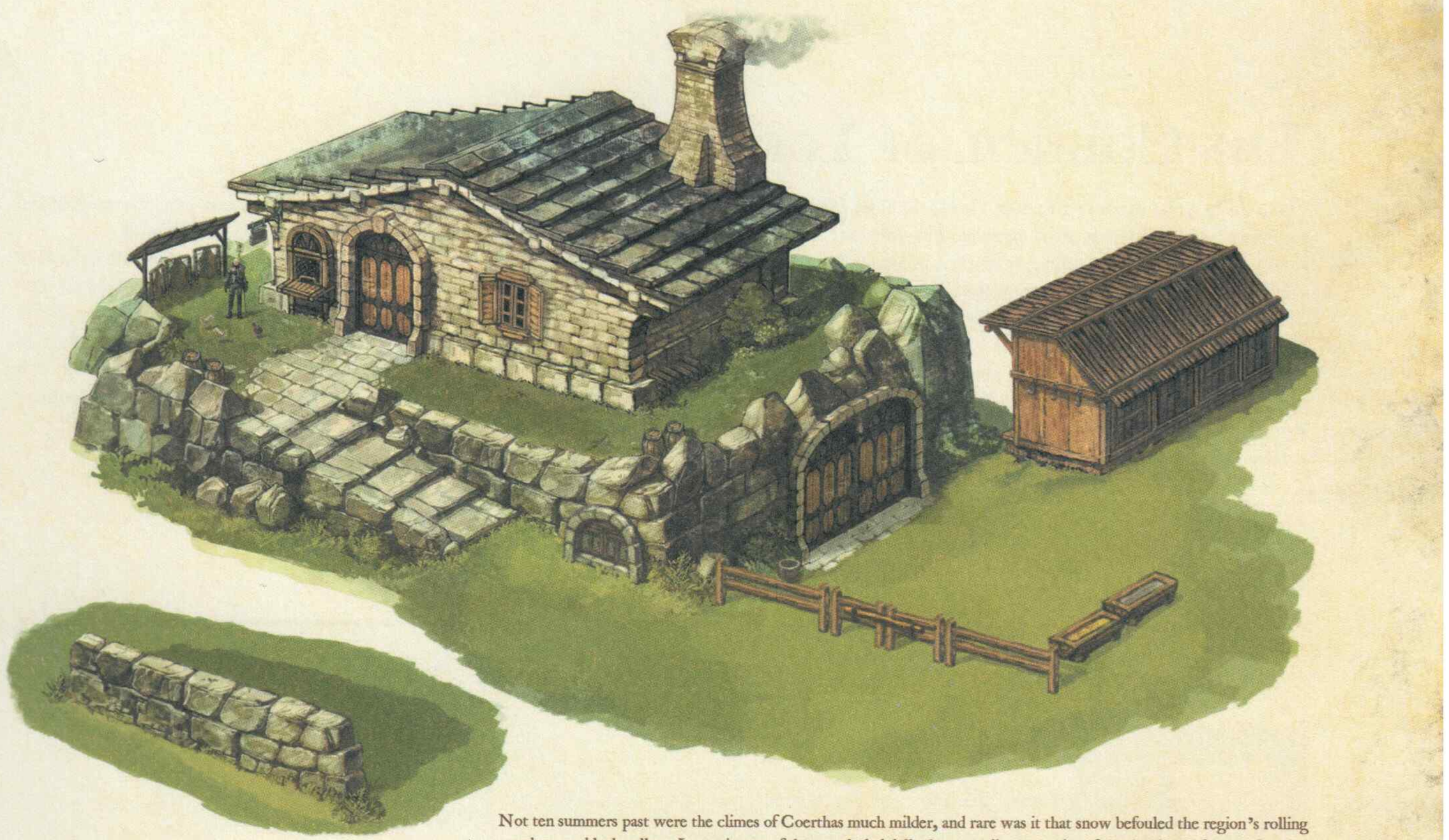
Content in the anonymity of their worship, the Lambs of Dalamud remained decidedly hidden from the public eye—that is, until a rare meteor shower drew the cult from the shadows. It is about this time members began to break their silence, claiming allegiance with the brotherhood, and actively working to recruit new members. Still, their actions did not warrant immediate alarm. Local governments often chose to ignore the cult, thinking their time would pass, as was the case with most fringe sects of Twelve worship—a sect being how most often the Lambs were categorized. It was not until the lesser moon changed hue that the direction of the Lambs' actions took a dramatic turn—a violent one—as is documented in an incident at Owl's Nest.





Blood Price

It is around this time that a nameless adventurer (recollections of the individual are vague, with little agreement as to race or gender) arrives in idyllic Owl's Nest, nestled in a secluded valley in the Coerthas eastern lowlands. There he (or perhaps she) is approached by one of the hamlet's respected elders. The man claims his wife has been abducted by the Lambs of Dalamud and taken north to Gwyr-Aen to be sacrificed. Sensing the severity of the situation, the adventurer agrees to rescue the wife; however, upon arrival at the ancient stone circle, he finds no helpless captive, only crazed cultists who are all too ready for him. The adventurer emerges victorious from the ensuing battle, but there are no cries for mercy from the fallen cultists, only shouts of elation, for they have been made martyrs in the eyes of their Lord savior. The rite is complete. The adventurer has spilled the blood that will summon Dalamud back to the realm.



Not ten summers past were the climes of Coerthas much milder, and rare was it that snow befouled the region's rolling meadows and lush valleys. It was in one of these secluded dells that a small community of shepherds and farmers founded old Owl's Nest. Here lived the cultist Foxe until his sudden disappearance come the fall of Dalamud.

Whither the Flock

Despite numbering in what religious scholars estimate to be the thousands, the Lambs of Dalamud all but disappeared from the public eye immediately following the fall of the lesser moon. Scattered reports from across Eorzea suggest there may still be factions that continue the blood rites; however, their numbers are insignificant. Whither, then, did all of the Lambs go? It is quite possible that the beliefs of those cultists who survived the Calamity were dismantled by the revelation Dalamud was naught but an iron prison for the aetherial manifestation of a long-dead wyrm. Having lost faith, they simply abandoned the cult and returned to their old lives. Word from the Far East, though, may suggest otherwise. Adventurers and traders have brought back with them tales of intrigue—a swelling of the ranks of those scattered tribes who pledge spiritual allegiance to the Dusk Mother, Nhaama, and the abductions that have followed. Is it merely coincidence, or could this prove the beginnings of something sinister? Only time will tell.

Whispers of sanguine-cloaked knaves and blood-fueled rites of summoning can still be heard in Ul'dah's alehouses, as miners tell their tales of strange shadows gathered in long abandoned shafts deep in the mountains of northern Thanalan.

THE SAINTS OF THE TWELVE

In the various lands of Eorzea, there has long been a tradition of conferring the mantle of "saint" upon those worthy souls who have accomplished great works, or lived a life of exemplary virtue. These saints are each associated with the deity whose qualities they embody, and are revered as figures graced by divine benediction.

The Council of Loetstym

Marked by great deeds or purity of virtue, the lives of the saints have long been immortalized in story or song. The tale told in one hamlet, however, contradicted the telling in another, and even the validity of the sainthood itself was often only recognized by certain social institutions. Thus it was that some five-hundred years ago, Archon Loetstym Merlzirnsyn of Sharlayan sought to redress these inconsistencies by collecting scattered anecdotes from across the realm, and unifying the results in his hagiographic compilation, the *Saints of Eorzea*. Based upon this definitive work, his successors went on to establish the "Council of Loetstym" in a move to formalize the process of canonization. Once every seven years, its members convene in the Sharlayan motherland to pore over potential cases, and cast votes to elevate new candidates to sainthood.

The figures thus recognized by the council become a ubiquitous sight in Eorzean society. They might appear as the subjects of theatrical productions or children's picture books, but perhaps the most common saintly encounter for adventurers is found in the stained-crystal illustrations of leve plates. As seen below, each leve plate features the depiction of a scene from a chosen saint's life, titled with a word which encapsulates the personage's most prominent virtue.

History in Stained Crystal

VALOUR *Valor*

Saint Daniffen and the Basilisk

When the basilisk came, the fishermen's poles which once bristled on the banks of the Velodyna River vanished from view, replaced with a sprouting of mercenaries' spears. Yet even these hardened fortune-seekers could find no counter to the beast's deadly gaze, and a forest of petrified flesh soon crowded the riverbed. Just when it seemed none remained to challenge the monster, there appeared an itinerant knight by the name of Ser Daniffen. The peril lay in meeting the creature's eyes, not in being seen by them, he proclaimed, and thus did he pad his helm's visor to render himself blind. Tracking his prey by the sound of its scraping claws alone, the knight stalked and slew the terrible basilisk. Daniffen was celebrated for his valor and daring, and raised up as a saint blessed of Halone.

TENACITIE *Tenacity*

Saint Norvello's Quarry

On her way home from a campaign, the mercenary Norvello chanced across a pilgrim camp under attack by bandits. She immediately joined the fray, slaying several brigands before tumbling from her saddle with an arrow lodged in her thigh. Thrown into disarray, the surviving attackers quit the field, seizing a pilgrim youth as they did so. His frightened yelp put Norvello in mind of an enemy soldier she'd killed—a green recruit, scarcely more than a boy. Clenching her jaw against the pain, she pulled herself back onto her mount, and set off in pursuit. The sun was setting when her chocobo returned. On its back it carried the youth, who breathed gently in slumber, and Norvello herself, who breathed not at all. The mercenary was remembered for her selfless tenacity, and raised up as a saint blessed of Azeyma.

DILIGENS *Diligence*

Saint Tothor the Ratcatcher

Every harvesting season, the villagers dreaded the inevitable plague of ravenous forest rats. Though they stood guard night and day, they could not keep the nimble vermin from their crops. When it was the hardworking Tothor's turn to keep watch, he did the unthinkable—he removed the fences from around his own well-tended patch of beans, and even put out pails of fresh water. Upon seeing his ravaged field the next morning, the villagers mocked the man for his fool-headed actions. But their derisive laughter lasted only until the rats appeared—sluggish and drowsy from their feast of beans, the bewhiskered pests were easily caught. The diligent Tothor was praised for the sacrifice he made on behalf of the village, and raised up as a saint blessed of Nophica.

VERACITIE *Veracity*

Saint Nonoya and the Voice of Truth

There was once a general renowned for his tactics. The mere sight of his standard on the field was enough to send tremors through enemy ranks, which would escalate within moments to an outright rout. Every such victory would earn the general an extravagant tribute from the king—and the opportunity to flaunt his growing wealth before his troops. A Lalafell named Nonoya, the feeblest of his soldiers, was the one to finally expose the general's true character. Weary of the bragging, and suspicious of his triumphs, Nonoya lingered behind when the next battle culminated in the predictable fleeing of the foe. She crept into the enemy camp, and was witness to her general raising a tankard with the rival officer. Praised for the testimony she provided to the court, the veracious Nonoya was raised up as a saint blessed of Thaliak.

WYSDOM *Wisdom*

Saint Llafymae and the Hero's Lay

Llafymae the bard sung songs of heroes' hearts. In a time when folk craved overblown epics where fearless champions slew monsters by the score, she crafted verses which laid bare the mind of her subject matter. Her words drew an unapologetic picture of uncertainty and terror, of crippling wounds endured for the sake of honor. She wrote of the heroes' true selves, which history had buried beneath the grandeur of their deeds. Although her works did not stir the blood as would a valorous ballad, it was no coincidence that those sobered by the truths contained therein did find firmer footing on the path of adventure. Celebrated for the wisdom she imparted to a host of fledgling heroes, Llafymae was raised up as a saint blessed of Nymeia.

TEMPERANS *Temperance*

Saint Ascya's Mead

The *Astalicia* drifted on the empty sea, her rudder shattered by a sea serpent's tail. Not a shadow of land could be seen on the sun-flooded horizon, and even the crew's veterans were gripped by tendrils of despair. The captain put on a brave face, but it was only Ascya, the cook's apprentice, whose calm was unfeigned. After hearing the ship's navigator estimate three weeks until the current washed them up on the nearest shore, she drafted a plan to conserve their remaining rations. The sailors cajoled and threatened. The captain shouted orders. But she refused to dole out more food than was scheduled, never leaving her vigil beside the mead barrel. Praised for rescuing her entire crew with her temperance, Ascya was raised up as a saint blessed of Llymlaen.

RESOLUE *Resolve*

Saint Allene and the Fields of Summer

The festive commotion in the village square turned to bewildered panic as Allene rushed at the crowds, her harvest scythe in hand. She screamed at the villagers to flee into the fields, and flee they did—not for fear of the scythe, but of the unholy rage twisting the features of a woman known best for her placid nature. No sooner had the revelers taken refuge than a howling tornado tore a path of destruction through the now-empty village. As a farmer, Allene was well acquainted with the vagaries of the weather and, sensing the coming catastrophe, chose to feign a maddened attack on her neighbors rather than waste time on explanations. Celebrated for her act of resolve, Allene was raised up as a saint blessed of Nophica.

CONSTANCIE *Constancy*

Saint Moergynn and the Edgeless Blade

In a certain castle, there lived a pair of brothers. The two had always been close, until one day a quarrel over some insignificant matter escalated from a simple disagreement to insults flung and gauntlets thrown. They each approached Moergynn, the town's finest blacksmith, to request the forging of swords for their forthcoming duel. Moergynn accepted the commissions, patiently re-hammering the blades as both brothers stopped by with additional instructions. On the day of the duel, the crowd was taken aback, for the siblings' swords were both blunted into little more than crude clubs. The blacksmith had merely shaped the steel as he had been bid, his reputation for excellence be damned. Revered for the constancy of his craft, Moergynn was raised up as a saint blessed of Rhalgr.

IUSTIS *Justice*

The Seven Deeds of Saint Gafryde

Injured on the field of battle, Ser Gafryde spent seven days in the care of a woodland hermit. On the day of his departure, the hermit interrupted the knight's words of gratitude—he had no need of thanks. What he wished was for Gafryde to perform seven deeds in the name of justice. He himself had failed to act when action was called for, and thus did he live apart, alone with his remorse. Seven years passed before Gafryde returned to the hermit. Gravely wounded, the knight spit blood as he spoke of the minor nation he had fought to save, and of the seven times his belief in righteousness had guided his sword arm. Sir Gafryde grew still then, his story told, a faint smile forever etched upon his pallid features. Revered for his unbending sense of justice, Gafryde was raised up as a saint blessed of Oschon.

SYMPATHIE *Sympathy*

Saint Zozonan and the Empty Chapel

Long was the war, and numerous were the refugees who fled its devastation. When Zozonan caught sight of the haggard throng approaching the city walls, it was as a knife twisting in his heart. The compassionate friar went in search of donations, but the merchants, miserly and selfish, rebuffed his gentle pleas. And so he gathered the few implements of value from his chapel, bartered them for provisions, and set off with a full cart to feed the hungry. Shamed by the austere Zozonan's act of generosity, those watching from the gates were moved to join him. First one city dweller ventured forth, and then another, until finally a crowd of helpers assembled to continue what the friar had begun. Revered for his example of sympathy and the lives he helped save, Zozonan was raised up as a saint blessed of Nald'thal.

CONFYDENS *Confidence*

Saint Meryall's Log

Lady Meryall, the archaeologist responsible for unearthing the ruins of Sil'dih, was known for memorizing the names of several hundred site laborers and assigning each a task suited to his or her talents. She also kept a detailed log on the families of her workers, sending small nameday gifts to sons and daughters, and slipping alchemical remedies into the hands of those caring for ailing parents. Meryall's caring attention earned the trust of her work crews, and excavations proceeded without debate or delay. Thus it was that the subterranean ruins were swiftly identified as the origin of the zombie scourge, and effective measures could be taken to contain the peril. Praised for the confidence she inspired in others, Meryall was raised up as a saint blessed of Althyk.

CHERYTE *Charity*

The Warp and Weft of Saint Lathme

Be it through war, sickness, or simple mishap, men are fragile creatures to whom death comes all too easily. And whilst this is a great misfortune for the one who passes, it is often of greater tragedy for those left behind. Seeking to ease the hardship of widows suddenly bereft of their family's main provider, Lathme would teach the art of spinning yarn, weaving cloth, and sewing clothes. She offered up her trade knowledge and asked naught in return, for in her youth, she too had known the loss of a husband. For all she gave freely, Lathme was praised for her charity, and raised up as a saint blessed of Nymeia.

INGINUITIE *Ingenuity*

Saint Thalysa and the Everlasting Bread

It was an age when the world knew only war. A city of the realm hired mercenaries aplenty to protect its crops, but there was a limit to how much grain could be safely sown and harvested. Rations of bread grew less generous by the day, and it was just as rumbles of discontent began to rise from the sellswords' ranks that Thalysa the baker devised a brilliant solution: by experimenting with methods of leavening and baking, she had created a new, denser variety of bread. Although their size remained unchanged, these heavy loaves encouraged more chewing, and by some strange process left the one who consumed them feeling far less hungry. Before long, the soldiers ceased their complaints. Celebrated for her ingenuity in feeding empty bellies, Thalysa was raised up as a saint blessed of Menphina.

MUNEFYCENS *Munificence*

Saint Adama Landama and the Market Basket

Adama Landama was a merchant of well-established wealth. Whilst many knew him as a miserly soul who would not spare a clipped gil for the poor, the peddlers in the marketplace held a decidedly different view of the man. Though it was true Adama was not one for charity, he never haggled over the price of wares he considered worth purchasing—be it a little girl's collection of seashells, or an idle artist's latest masterpiece. His practice of strolling amongst the stalls and filling an oversized basket with whatever took his fancy attracted new traders to the business of specialty goods, and eventually led to the market becoming the largest of its kind in the region. Celebrated for his munificence in the field of commerce, Adama Landama was raised up as a saint blessed of Nald'thal.

BENEUOLENS *Benevolence*

Saint Mocianne and the Unwithered Wreath

In return for a sizable contribution to the royal treasury, the alchemists were granted a monopoly over apothecary goods. The price of medicines immediately began to rise, until soon the simplest of remedies became luxuries the commonfolk could never hope to afford. Unable to bear the suffering of her neighbors, Mocianne took action. Drawing on the wisdom bestowed by her grandmother, she gathered wild herbs on the outskirts of town, then delivered her bounty to the sick and injured in secret—by weaving the herbs into flower wreaths was she able to deceive the guards who kept a watch for smuggled goods. Praised for her benevolence in the face of indifferent greed, Mocianne was raised up as a saint blessed of Menphina.

SYNCERYTE *Sincerity*

Saint Wargbhar the Mirthful

Also known as "Truthful Bear," Wargbhar was a well-respected pioneer leader who treated with others in good faith and good cheer, no matter their origin. It was this all-embracing stance which fostered a sense of community in his frontier settlement, and allowed the diverse inhabitants to band together in the face of famine and other such difficulties. Wargbhar's forthright attitude extended even to his dealings with the beast tribes, his earnest negotiations patiently dismantling the barriers of language and custom, and transforming adversaries into unlikely allies. Upon his death, pioneer and beastman alike gathered to mourn his passing, and celebrate his extraordinary life. Ever after revered as an example of enduring sincerity, Wargbhar was raised up as a saint blessed of Rhalgr.

PIETIE *Piety*

Saint Dhyata and the Lake of Plenty

Year after year, the brass loaches in the lake grew fewer and fewer in number. When the wise woman Dhyata came at the request of the troubled fishermen, she needed but one glance at their catch to discern the source of their woes—in their nets wriggled not only the grown loaches, but also the young and the egg-swollen females as well. After lecturing her audience on the gods' miracle of life, the sage snapped a branch to a certain length to show the size of fish they should keep, and forbade them from casting nets during the spawning season. The fishermen obediently followed her instructions, and within a few short summers the surface of the lake fairly churned with feeding loaches, so complete was their recovery. Revered for her lessons on life's sanctity, the pious Dhyata was raised up as a saint blessed of Llymlaen.

CANDOUR *Candor*

The Golden Crown of Saint Endalim

In the midst of an apple orchard, a confrontation was brewing. On one side stood the peasants, tools raised in revolt; on the other, the lord of the land, flanked by his men-at-arms. Bloodshed seemed inevitable, until an elderly knight strode onto the field and planted himself between the feuding parties. The soldiers threatened the old man with a beating, but their blustering soon fell quiet as their lord sunk to his knees, pale-faced and stammering. Even without the golden crown atop his head, he had recognized the face of Archbishop Endalim IV. The archbishop had learned of the lord's mistreatment of his farmers, and sought to mediate the dispute not as a monarch, but as a man of the people. Celebrated for the impartial candor of his methods, Endalim was raised up as a saint blessed of Halone.

CONCORDE *Concord*

Saint Jerhomme and the Unlikely Brotherhood

Jerhomme was a hero of great acclaim, famed for rescuing many a fair maiden—and not a few thankful men—from the jaws of slavering beasts. On his travels, however, he was accompanied not by master mages or adept archers, but by ordinary folk—fishermen and camp cooks he met along the road. What they lacked in martial prowess they made up for with practical skills, and their enduring camaraderie sustained the champion through countless trials. Rather than any bauble or trinket he won through adventuring, it was these lasting friendships which he treasured above all else. Celebrated for the harmonious concord of his traveling brotherhood, Jerhomme was raised up as a saint blessed of Oschon.

VNYTIE *Unity*

Saint Bodenolf and the Bottomless Well

In a hasty retreat from a losing battle, Bodenolf led his mercenary company into a ramshackle village. Despite the villagers' obvious poverty, they offered the soldiers warm welcome, binding their wounds and concealing them when pursuers came in search of survivors. Bodenolf and his men gave hearty thanks for their salvation before going on their way. Several years later, when drought struck the land, the mercenaries returned to the village to dig their saviors a well. Not satisfied the favor had been repaid, Bodenolf rallied his company when a throng of brigands came to seize the precious source of water. And though they were outnumbered and taking heavy losses, not a single mercenary sought to flee the field. Praised for the unity he inspired, Bodenolf was raised up as a saint blessed of Nald'thal.

PROMPTITUDE

The Call of Saint Rhita

Flanked by two elder siblings, the huntress Rhita set off in pursuit of the slavers who had taken her younger sister. They tracked their quarry to the coast, just in time to spy the villains preparing to load their "cargo" onto a waiting galley. The descent to the beach, however, suddenly shifted from gentle slope to precipitous drop, and there was no time to scout a less perilous path down. Eyes rolling in fear, the antelopes the women rode balked at the cliff's edge. At this, Rhita let out a piercing war cry, spurring the mounts into a headlong rush down the rocky face to the sands below. The slavers crumbled before the unexpected charge, and the sisters returned home triumphant, their rescued sibling in tow. Praised for her swift judgment and prompt action, Rhita was raised up as a saint blessed of Althyk.

EQWYTE *Equity*

Saint Anselmet's Decree

In a town swamped by corruption, the coin held an edge sharper than the blade. The pockets of court officials bulged with gold, yet the law was worth less than the vulgar scrawl on a tavern-room wall. Thus when a merchant tripped over a street urchin, and beat the child to death in a drunken rage, the man expected his ample purse to pay for his crimes. But Anselmet, a newly appointed judge, would not be swayed by bribes. Frustrated, the merchant sought to obstruct justice in myriad other ways, and again was stymied by Anselmet's resolute adherence to the law. The judge championed the return of order, becoming an unbreakable shield for the innocent. Revered for the equity he restored, Anselmet was raised up as a saint blessed of Azeyma.

PROUYDENS *Providence*

Saint Leseraux the Seer

Over the course of his career, Leseraux had transcribed many a crumbling scroll and dusty ledger. It was only when he entered his later years that he first set his quill to writing an original work. The tome Leseraux thus penned was a collection of fables which, whilst depicting the most ordinary of events, concealed various morsels of wisdom. In its pages, a criminal might find the means for atonement, or a warrior the seed of a new strategy. Be the reader wise man or fool, the stories offered each the insight he required. Containing as it did the distilled knowledge of every manuscript he had ever copied, Leseraux's book not only served to predict what trials the future might bring, but also hinted at the means for their solution. For his enlightened providence, Leseraux was raised up as a saint blessed of Thaliak.

DEUOCION *Devotion*

Saint Basqual and the Rampart

The sturdy gates held for days, but at last they buckled under the relentless onslaught. Charged with the defense of the city, Captain Basqual and his company formed up in the courtyard, and caught the enemy's advance on a wall of shields. As the foe continued to swarm through the breach, however, the captain saw fear blossom in the eyes of his soldiers. Without hesitation, Basqual stripped off his armor, and nimbly skipped along the shield wall in naught but his nameday skin. The sight of the naked captain prancing amongst their ranks caused many an astonished snort—broken free of mounting terror, the soldiers fought to protect their exposed superior, and in their resolve succeeded in repelling the invaders. Celebrated for his devotion to maintaining morale, Basqual was raised up as a saint blessed of Byregot.

INDUSTRIE *Industry*

Saint Coinach and the Lost Bounty

Coinach was a seminary student of unprecedented brilliance. After becoming infatuated with the mention of "Allag" in the scriptures, however, his obsession with chasing the shadow of the long-lost empire cost him prestige with his tutors, and resulted in his eventual expulsion. The scripture's word was beyond reproach. Yet for those who had known naught but self-contained city-states, the idea of a world-spanning regime belonged firmly in the realm of allegory. Coinach turned then to the merchant's trade, and poured all his profits into research and excavation. It was not until the year before his death that he at last uncovered the ruins of an imperial city, and provided unquestionable evidence of the empire's existence. Revered for the industry of his efforts, Coinach was raised up as a saint blessed of Althyk.

HABYLITE *Ability*

Saint Randolfe and the Assassin

The assassin came on highborn orders to spill the lifeblood of the shepherd Randolfe, bastard son of the king, but found no sign of his quarry anywhere in the village. A few guarded queries revealed that the boy had herded his flock to the highlands and remained there for the past month, isolating the sheep from a deadly pestilence running rampant in neighboring fields. As fate would have it, Randolfe chose that very day to return, and the killer watched as the young shepherd readily gifted breeding animals to those who had lost their livestock. Struck by the selfless nobility of the boy's act, the assassin tossed aside his dagger and swore lifelong fealty to the king's illegitimate heir. Beloved for his effortless ability to make vassals of even the bleakest souls, Randolfe was raised up as a saint blessed of Menphina.

SAPPYENS *Sapience*

Saint Tataroon's Toil

A goobbue of immense size and violent temperament stalked the countryside, and with peddlers too terrified to travel the roads, supplies in the mountain villages began to dwindle. Winter was fast approaching—if stores were not laid in for the cold months ahead, the villagers faced a grim season indeed. Yet despite this impending hardship, the cowardly local lord refused to risk his guards against the lumbering beast, and it fell to Tataroon, a Qiqirn trader, to take matters into his own tiny hands. Offering himself as bait, Tataroon lured out the goobbue, leading it through a bewildering series of traps, before finally collapsing an abandoned storehouse on the creature's head. Praised for the sapience of his cunning preparations, the Qiqirn was raised up as a saint blessed of Thaliak.

CONUICCION *Conviction*

The Final Stand of Saint Finnea

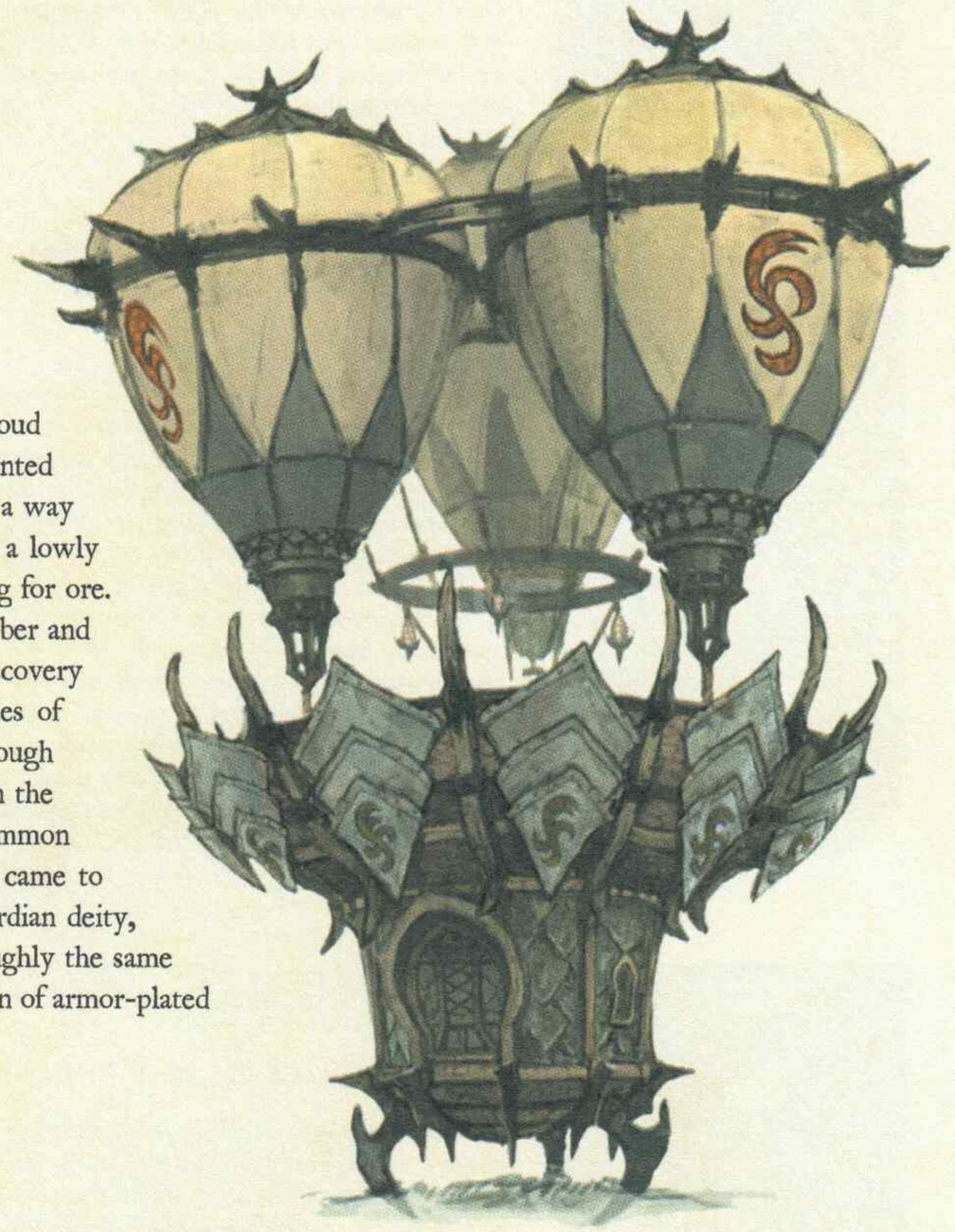
The fortress hold's defenders fought valiantly against the dragon horde, but as the battle wore on, the stench of desperation began to permeate the air. It was then that a fluttering pennant bearing the device of a white swan appeared from behind the curve of the mountain path—the lady knight Finnea had arrived with reinforcements. Though yet a novice with the blade, Finnea was possessed of a spirit seemingly incapable of conceding defeat, and had proven her mettle on the field time and again. Thus did her presence serve to reignite the flagging courage of the defending soldiers, and inspire a miraculous retaliation against their winged foe. Revered for her unyielding conviction, Finnea was raised up as a saint of Halone.

THE ADVENT OF FLIGHT

Since the dawn of time, man has ever dreamed of taking to the skies—and take to the skies he eventually did, upon the wings of beasts and spellcraft. Not to be easily satisfied, he then sought to exploit this newfound ability to the full, turning to science in a bid to build flying machines that might bear heavier burdens, ever higher and ever farther. This section explores the development of those techniques that have allowed man to soar like cloudkin.

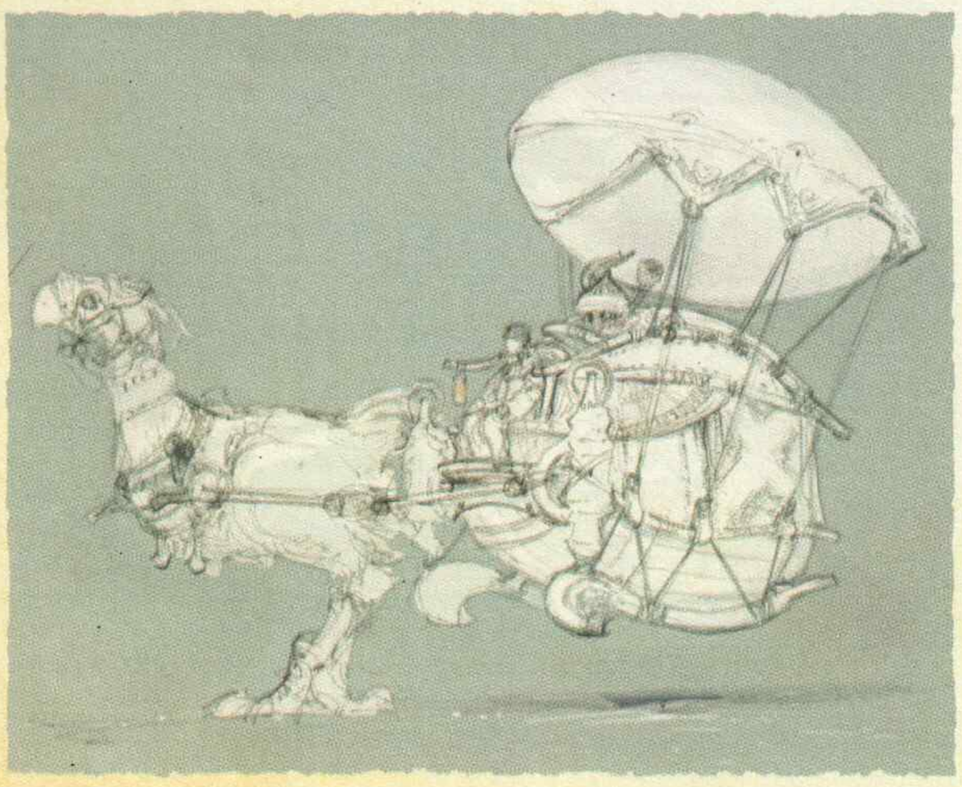
Ixali Dirigibles

After incurring the elementals' wrath and being banished from the Black Shroud some 500 years ago, the Ixal lost their capability for flight, their wings grown stunted by a trick of nature. Thus cruelly consigned to the ground, they fervently sought a way to return to the skies. All their efforts, however, came to naught...until one day, a lowly Windriser—one of the laborer caste—struck a deposit of buoyant gas while mining for ore. A vaporized form of ceruleum, this gas quickly found use in pouches that kept timber and ore aloft, an innovation that greatly facilitated the transport of heavy cargo. This discovery was made approximately 210 summers ago, and after nearly three score decades of further experimenting, the Ixal succeeded in developing an air bladder large enough to lift a woven basket and its occupants. Thus did the first dirigible take flight. In the early days, these crafts were at the mercy of the wind, and accidents were a common occurrence. But in recent years, in the wake of Garuda's summoning, the Ixal came to possess eldritch artifacts known as airstones. Infused with the power of their guardian deity, these stones were attached to balloons to provide both thrust and steering. At roughly the same juncture, the Ixal also improved upon air bladder capacity, allowing for the creation of armor-plated balloons to carry them to war.



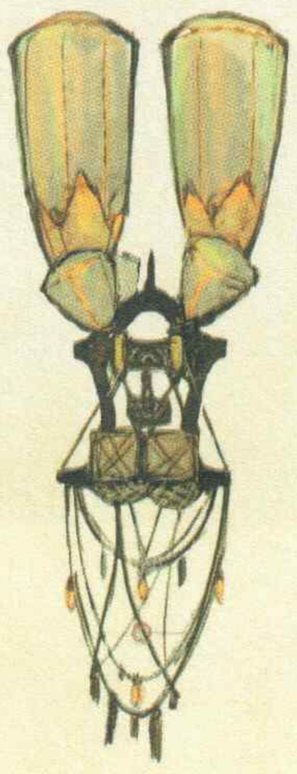
Chocobo Carriages

Approximately a century ago, an Ixali war balloon bearing a band of wood poachers crashed in the Black Shroud. The vessel was quickly seized by the Gridanians, and ere long air bladder technology had spread across Eorzea. The application of this knowledge, however, remained primitive for a time, being limited to balloon-assisted chocobo carts—the forerunners to modern-day chocobo carriages.



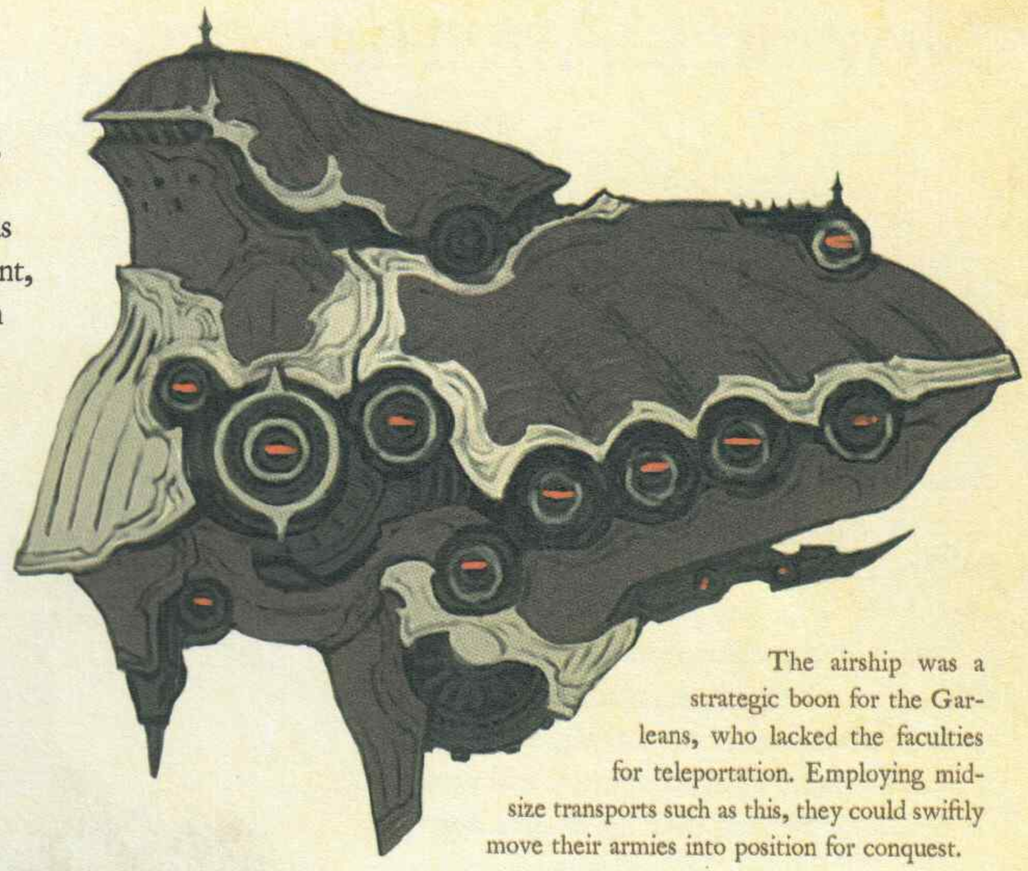
Early Air Travel

Barring those of the Ixal, it would not be until the year 1522 of the Sixth Astral Era that fully fledged flying craft began appearing over Eorzean skies, when a merchant and adventurer by the name of Tatanora succeeded in creating a viable balloon by closely replicating Ixali techniques. Nine years on, in the year 1531, the Ul'dahn native used his personal fortune to found Highwind Skyways, Eorzea's first privately owned air travel company. Only leisure flights were offered, however, and the balloons were not employed in the conveyance of people and cargo.

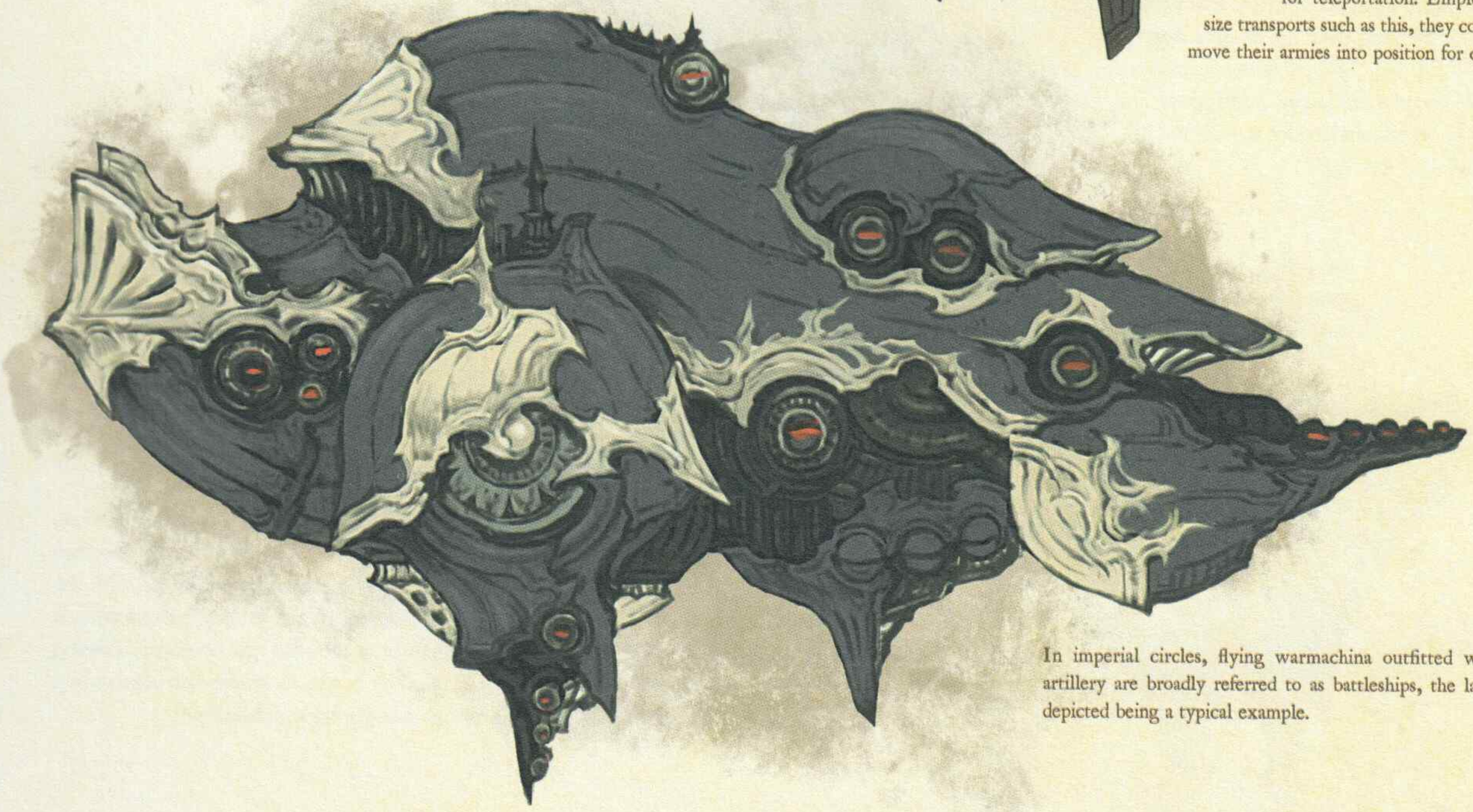


Garlean Airships

While the advent of flight in Aldenard is attributed to the Ixal, in neighboring Ilsabard the technology was brought to bloom by Garlean hands. In the Sixth Astral Era, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, then legatus Solus Galvus ushered in the magitek revolution, which saw machina undergo rapid advancement, flying craft chief among them. Republic engineers eventually arrived at a design employing ceruleum-gas-filled sacs for lift and ceruleum-powered mechanical wings for propulsion. Dubbed "airships," these machines were instrumental in the newborn Empire's efforts at territorial expansion, and further evolved through a technique acquired in annexed lands—the trapping of wind-aspected aether in special cloths. This led to the development of sophisticated aether-infused wings which, combined with the Empire's relentless pursuit of military might, gave rise to the steelclad craft whose menacing silhouettes are feared across the land.



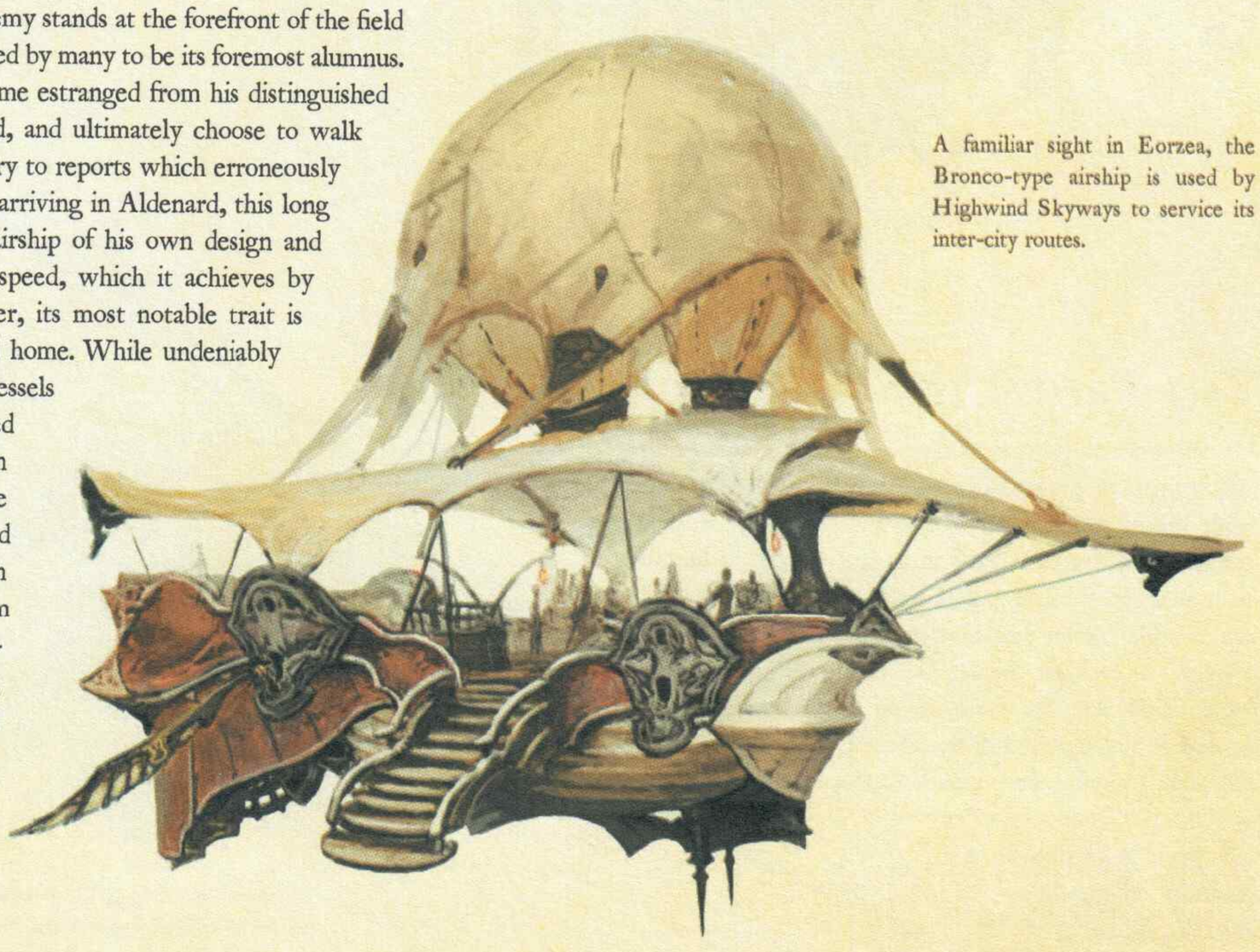
The airship was a strategic boon for the Garleans, who lacked the faculties for teleportation. Employing mid-size transports such as this, they could swiftly move their armies into position for conquest.



In imperial circles, flying warmachina outfitted with heavy artillery are broadly referred to as battleships, the large escort depicted being a typical example.

Eorzean Airships

The Empire's prestigious Magitek Academy stands at the forefront of the field of magitek, and Cid nan Garlond is considered by many to be its foremost alumnus. The young prodigy, however, would become estranged from his distinguished father, in whose footsteps he had followed, and ultimately choose to walk his own path and defect to Eorzea. Contrary to reports which erroneously state that Cid constructed the vessel upon arriving in Aldenard, this long journey he made with the *Enterprise*, an airship of his own design and construction renowned for its surpassing speed, which it achieves by eschewing armor. In Cid's mind, however, its most notable trait is the fact that it can be built in his adopted home. While undeniably marvels of engineering, the sophisticated vessels of the imperial fleet cannot be manufactured save at equally sophisticated facilities in Ilsabard, nor has the ore needed to make their superior cermet plating been discovered elsewhere. If airships are to proliferate in Eorzea, it must be possible to build them with local resources. Mindful of this condition, Cid established the Ironworks bearing his name, and together with Highwind Skyways developed a vessel suitable for mass production based on the *Enterprise*. The result is the Bronco, a type of vessel which brought air travel to the masses in Eorzea, its prominent balloon lending it a soft appearance that sets it apart from the rigid warmachines of the Empire.

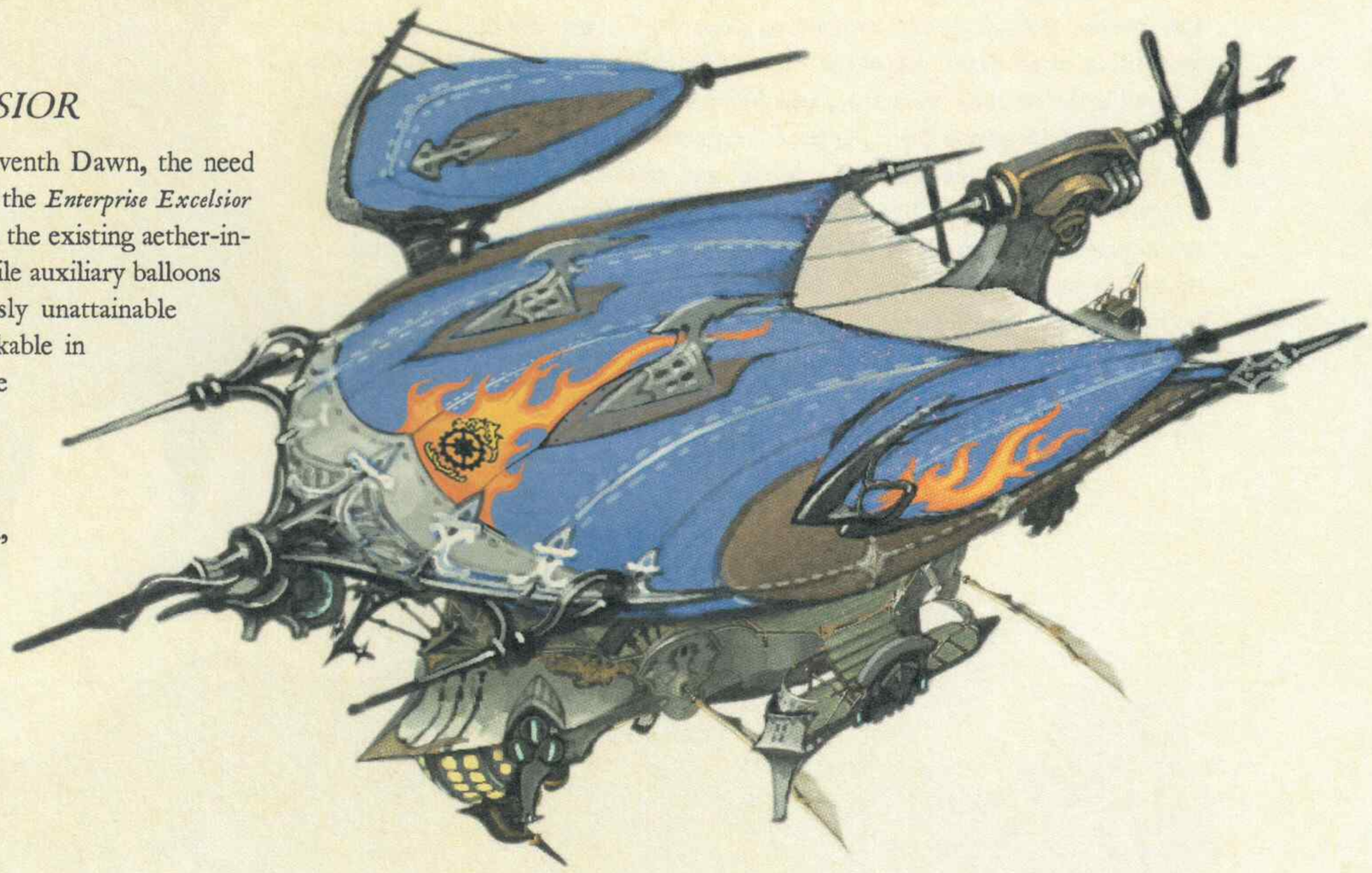


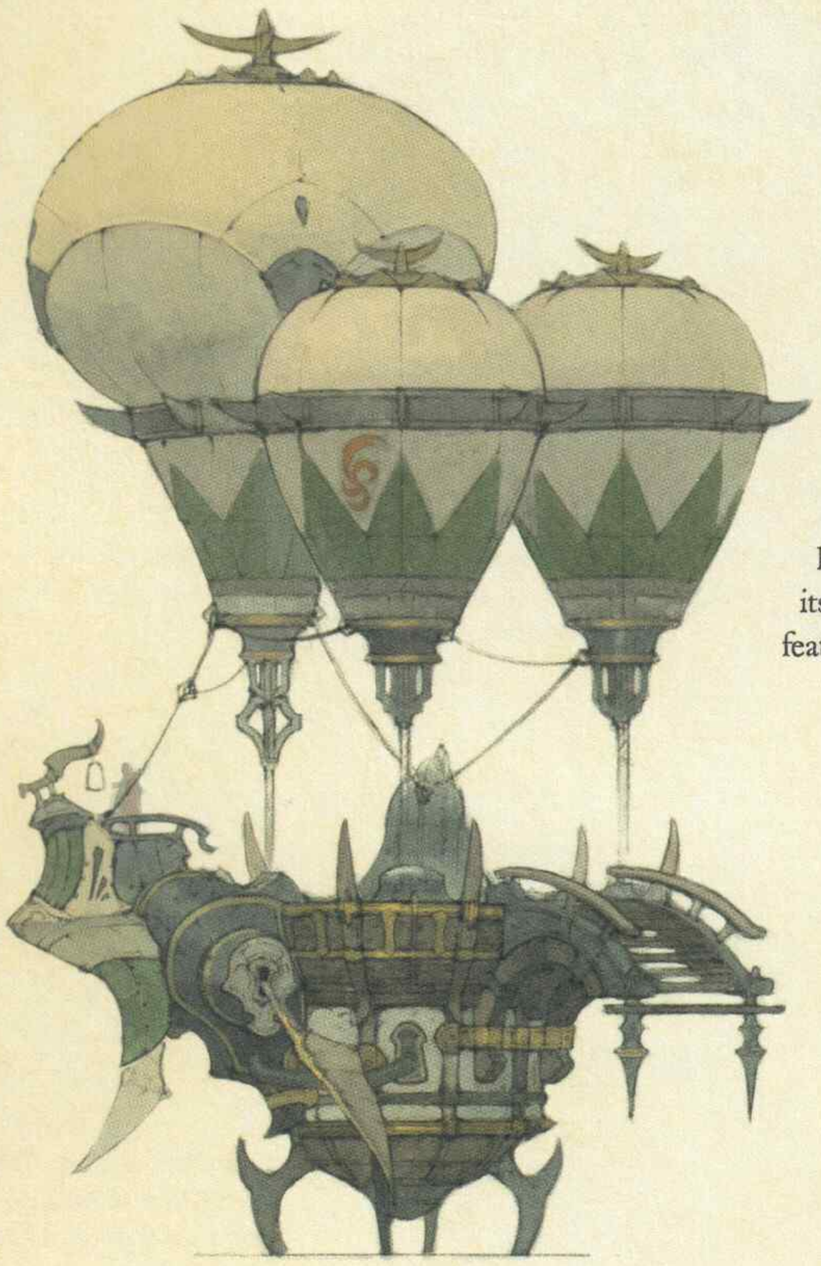
A familiar sight in Eorzea, the Bronco-type airship is used by Highwind Skyways to service its inter-city routes.

Notable Airships

The *Enterprise Excelsior*

In the course of aiding the Scions of the Seventh Dawn, the need arose for Cid to improve his airship. Thus was the *Enterprise Excelsior* born. Auxiliary propellers work in concert with the existing aether-infused wings to boost the vessel's top speed, while auxiliary balloons raise its maximum flying altitude to previously unattainable heights. While these improvements are remarkable in their own right, they pale in comparison to the aetheric ram extending from the vessel's nose. This advanced weapon combines an elemental converter and an aetheric converger to produce a powerful lance of light which, at full strength, is capable of piercing even an Allagan energy barrier. Of course, the operation of such a potent weapon requires prodigious quantities of aether, and its use is reserved only for times of dire need.





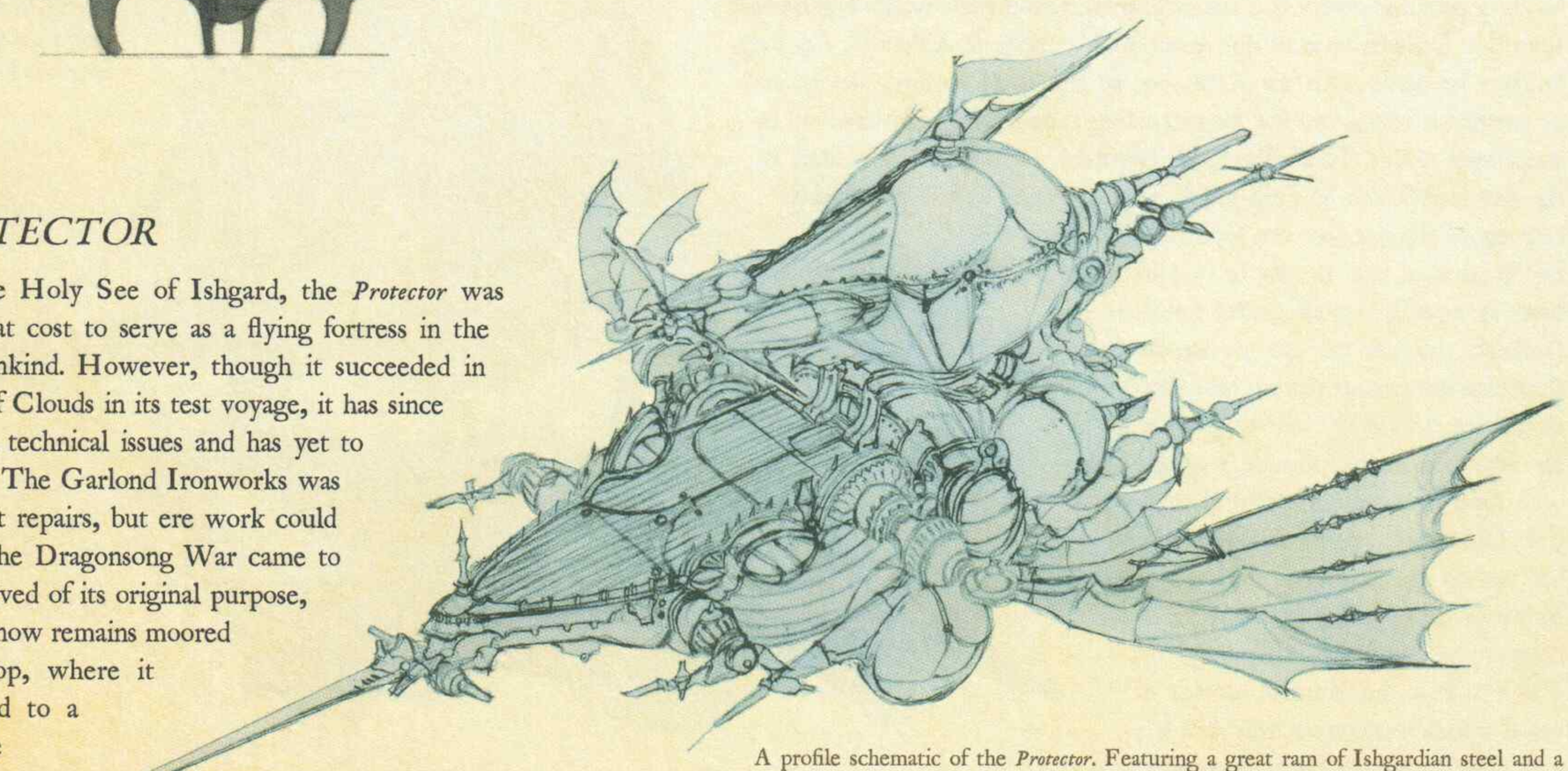
The *Dezul Qualan*

An experimental vessel, the *Dezul Qualan* is the handiwork of the Ehcatl Nine, a breakaway gathering of Ixali artisans and engineers dedicated to the development of their own airship. Built at their testing site in the Black Shroud with the cooperation of Tataramu, heir to Highwind Skyways, and willing adventurers, it has the distinction of being a collaborative effort between man and beastman. During its maiden flight, the vessel reached its target altitude of 5,000 yalms—an outstanding feat that has garnered the attention of the airship manufacturing industry.

A profile view of the *Dezul Qualan*. Its multiple-air-pouch construction is characteristic of Ixali balloon design, while its steering mechanism and ceruleum engine borrow from those seen in Bronco-type vessels.

The *Protector*

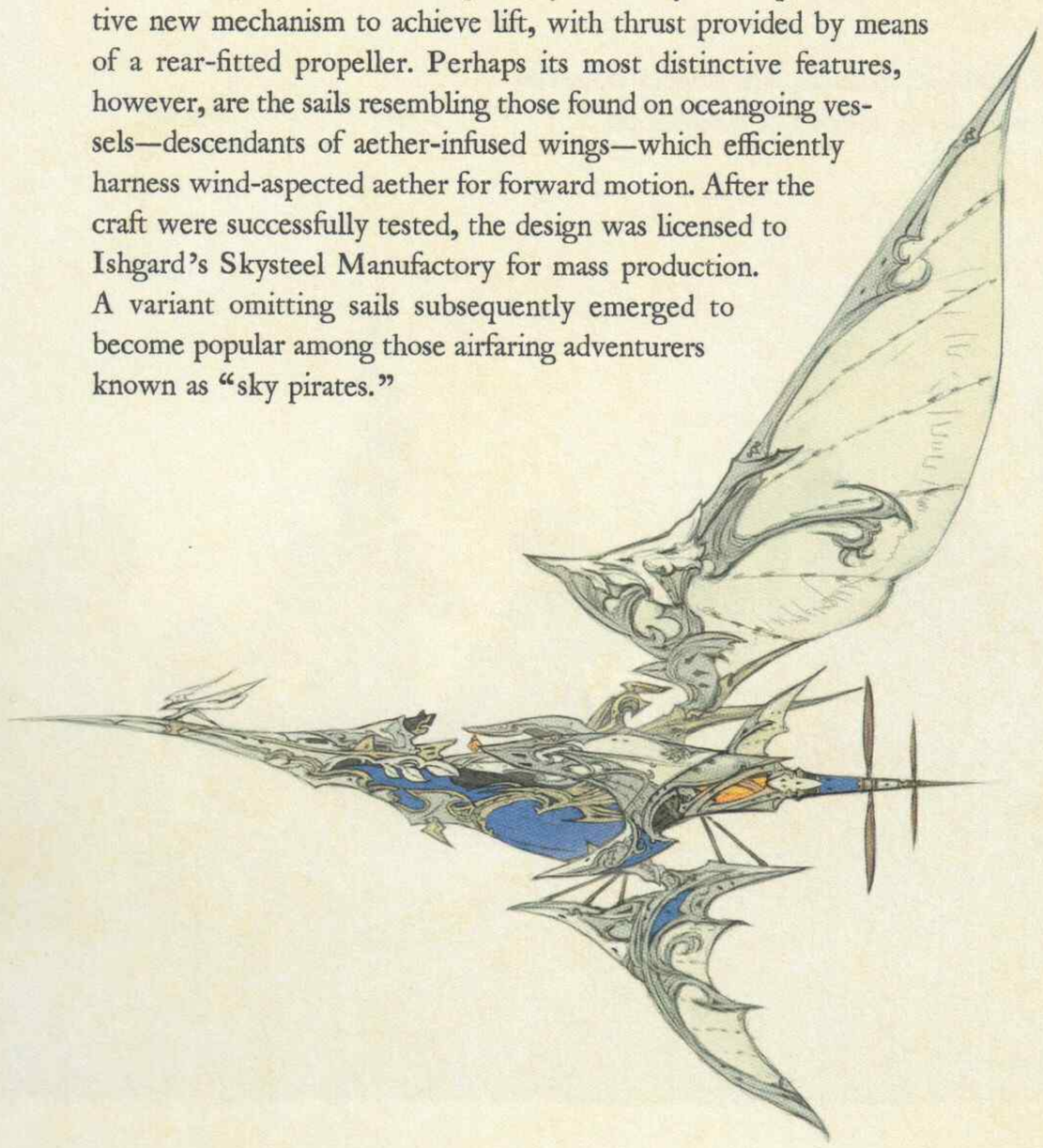
The pride of the Holy See of Ishgard, the *Protector* was constructed at great cost to serve as a flying fortress in the war against dragonkind. However, though it succeeded in reaching the Sea of Clouds in its test voyage, it has since been plagued with technical issues and has yet to see a single battle. The Garlond Ironworks was engaged to conduct repairs, but ere work could begin in earnest, the Dragonsong War came to an end. Thus deprived of its original purpose, the mighty airship now remains moored at Camp Cloudtop, where it has been relegated to a humble domicile for the Rose Knights.



A profile schematic of the *Protector*. Featuring a great ram of Ishgardian steel and a multitude of wings reminiscent of cloudkin, the vessel cuts a stately silhouette.

Manacutter

This single-rider craft was jointly designed by two leading engineers of the Garlond Ironworks, Biggs and Wedge. Exploiting the elemental conversion properties of corrupted crystals, they developed an innovative new mechanism to achieve lift, with thrust provided by means of a rear-fitted propeller. Perhaps its most distinctive features, however, are the sails resembling those found on oceangoing vessels—descendants of aether-infused wings—which efficiently harness wind-aspected aether for forward motion. After the craft were successfully tested, the design was licensed to Ishgard's Skysteel Manufactory for mass production. A variant omitting sails subsequently emerged to become popular among those airfaring adventurers known as "sky pirates."

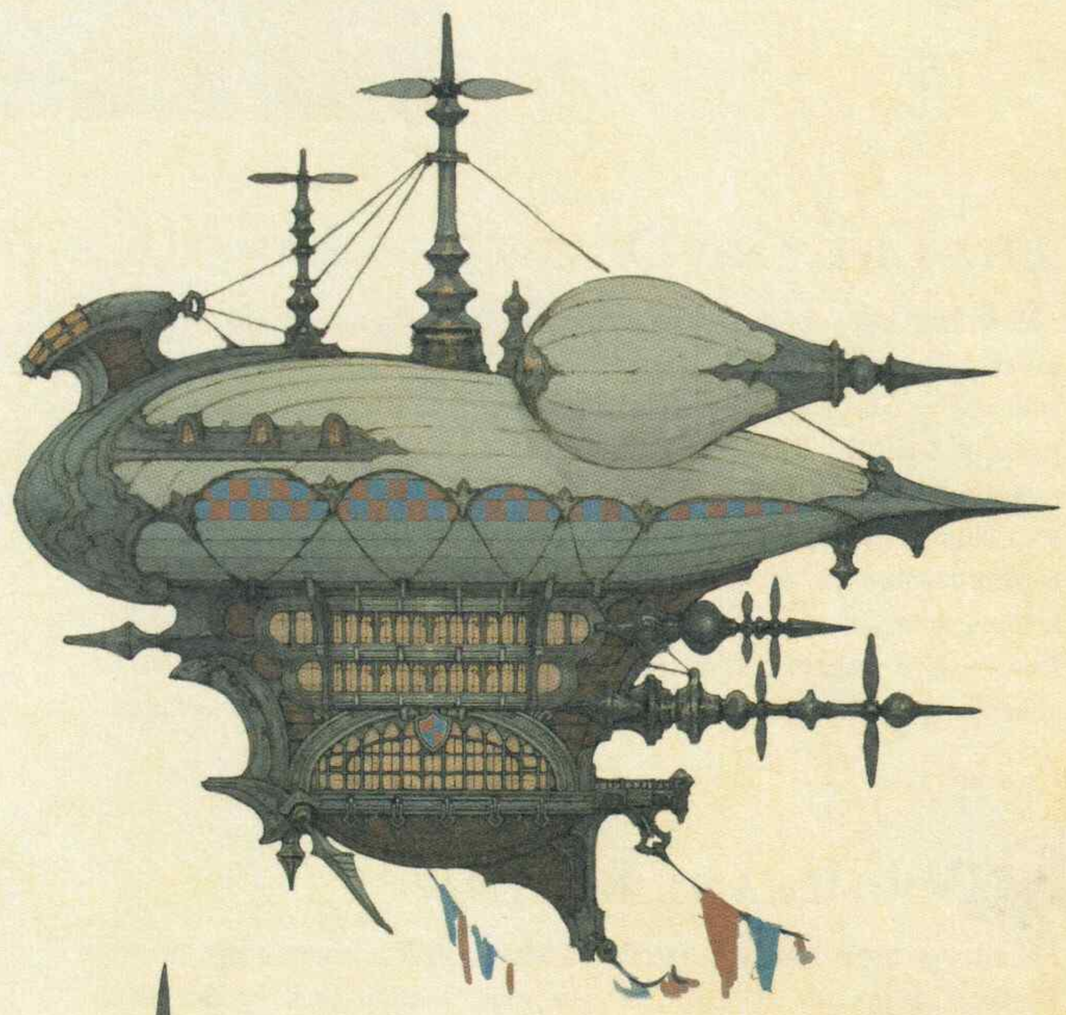


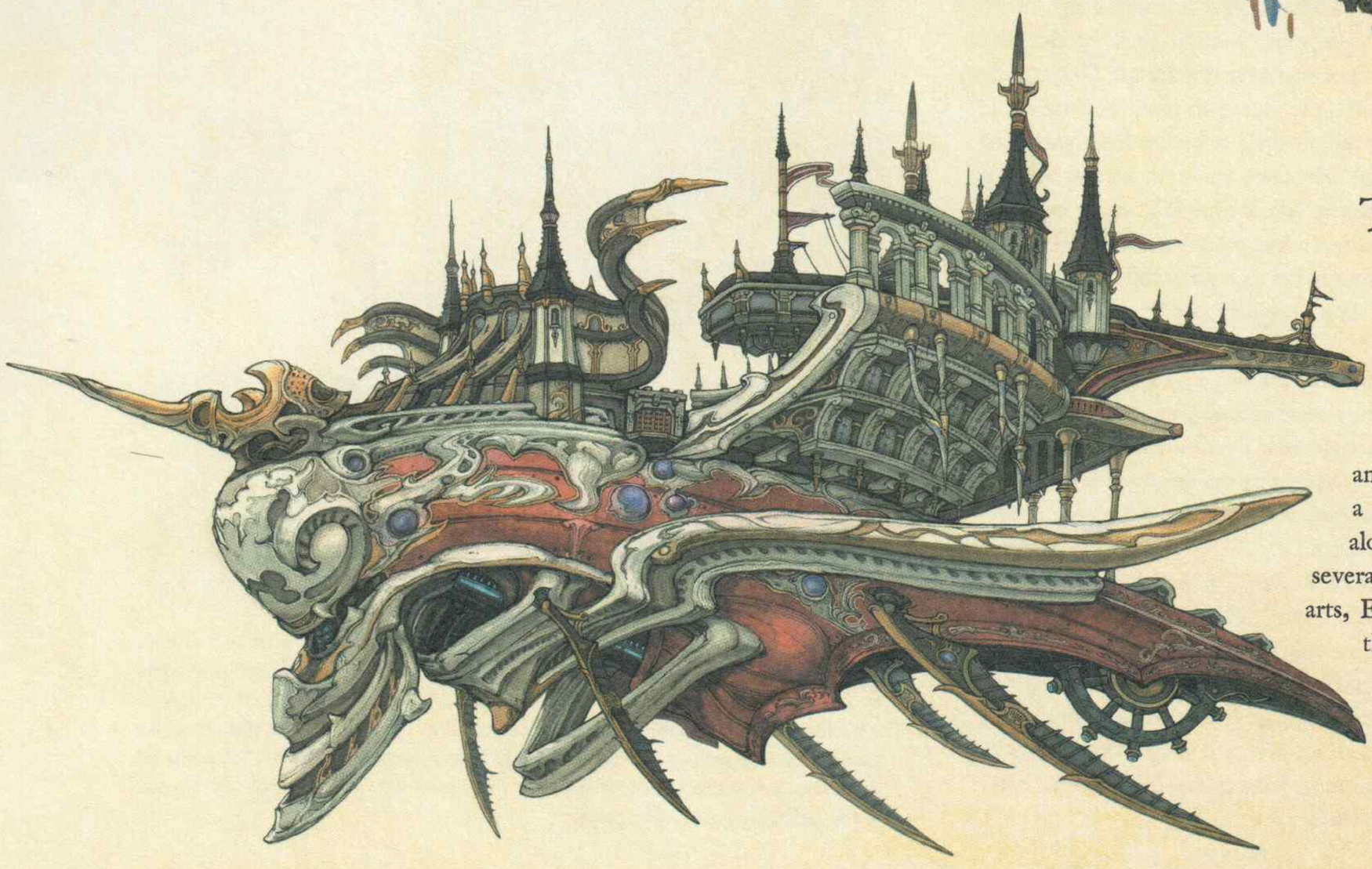
The *Falcon*

This prototype craft was created by the Garlond Ironworks to be the fastest single-rider airship in the world. Following the success of the manacutter, Engineer Wedge took a radically different approach for the *Falcon*. Corrupted crystals convert wind into fire energy to heat up air which is forcefully expelled rearward to provide thrust, while lift comes courtesy of ceruleum engines that power rotary wings. In particular, these wings are notable for their ability to tilt, engine housing and all, to various angles as the situation demands—a tour de force in airship design. Alas, an accident during speed testing led to all mass production models being fitted with a limiter.

The *Fantasia*

Constructed in Highwind Skyway's own workshop, the *Fantasia* is the company's first wholly in-house creation. The project was helmed by Tataramu, who achieved lift by marrying ceruleum gas pouches and rotary wings—the latter the lifework of his grandsire Tatanora, the company's esteemed founder. Designed to be a passenger craft capable of bearing a hundred, it possesses considerable bulk and is by no means a swift vessel. Nonetheless, this "turtle of the skies" serves its intended purpose admirably, delighting throngs of passengers on leisurely scenic flights.





The *Prima Vista*

A theater barge built at the imperial magitek factory, its design is credited to the engineer Baku, one of a privileged few beastmen suffered to abide in the capital. Dwarfing an aurora-class vessel, it boasts a sumptuous stage upon its deck along with seating for an audience of several hundred. A known patron of the arts, Emperor Solus zos Galvus gifted the vessel to the famed Majestic Imperial Theater Company, which has since journeyed to the farthest reaches of the Empire to enchant and enthrall audiences beyond count.

A WORLD OF WORDS

Language is a living entity, growing and evolving alongside those who wield it; as such, it is widely believed that only through the study of language might one discover the key to unlock the secrets of civilization.

The Common Tongue

Being home to myriad races and cultures, it is not surprising that Hydaelyn is also home to many and more unique tongues. On the Three Great Continents alone, scholars have identified ten score unique languages, and believe yet others may exist in the land's less-traveled corners. The most widely used is Eorzean by far, but how, exactly, did this phenomenon come to pass?

The Life and Death of a Language

Most languages spoken today, including Eorzean, can be traced back to an Allagan dialect that dominated the Third Astral Era—a dialect believed by Allagan scholars to have originated with the ancient Hyuran tribes of Aldenard. Both the empire's size and longevity saw the imperial tongue spread wide from Aldenard to Othard, and even to the western continent, over time rendering most other languages in the occupied territories obsolete. However, the coming of the Fourth Umbral Era severed the bonds that held the empire together, forcing large populations into relative isolation. With no simple means of communication over great distances, the Allagan dialect shattered, each shard experiencing an independent evolution which, over hundreds of generations, saw the rise of countless new languages.

By the Fifth Astral Era and the resurgence of civilization, there existed so many unique languages that the abundance gave rise to a new social class of translators and interpreters. Difficulty of communication between cities and nations often resulted in heightened political tensions, and it fell to translators to facilitate communication between the parties. It goes without saying that this skill eventually saw the members of the class wielding dangerously significant monetary and political clout.

A Triumphant Return

It was not until the Sixth Astral Era when a dialect resembling modern Eorzean returned to Aldenard to take root, brought back by the very Hyuran tribes from which the dialect had first descended. Despite the Elezen having arrived in the land first, the choice to limit their sphere of influence to the Black Shroud prevented their language from spreading beyond the great holt. The Hyur, however, came in waves, settling every corner of Aldenard (including the Black Shroud), and it was only a matter of time before Hyuran converse had permeated the realm. Yet, while the Hyur have always been known for their adaptability, for reasons unknown they proved adamant in their unwillingness to succumb to the prevailing Elezen tongue.

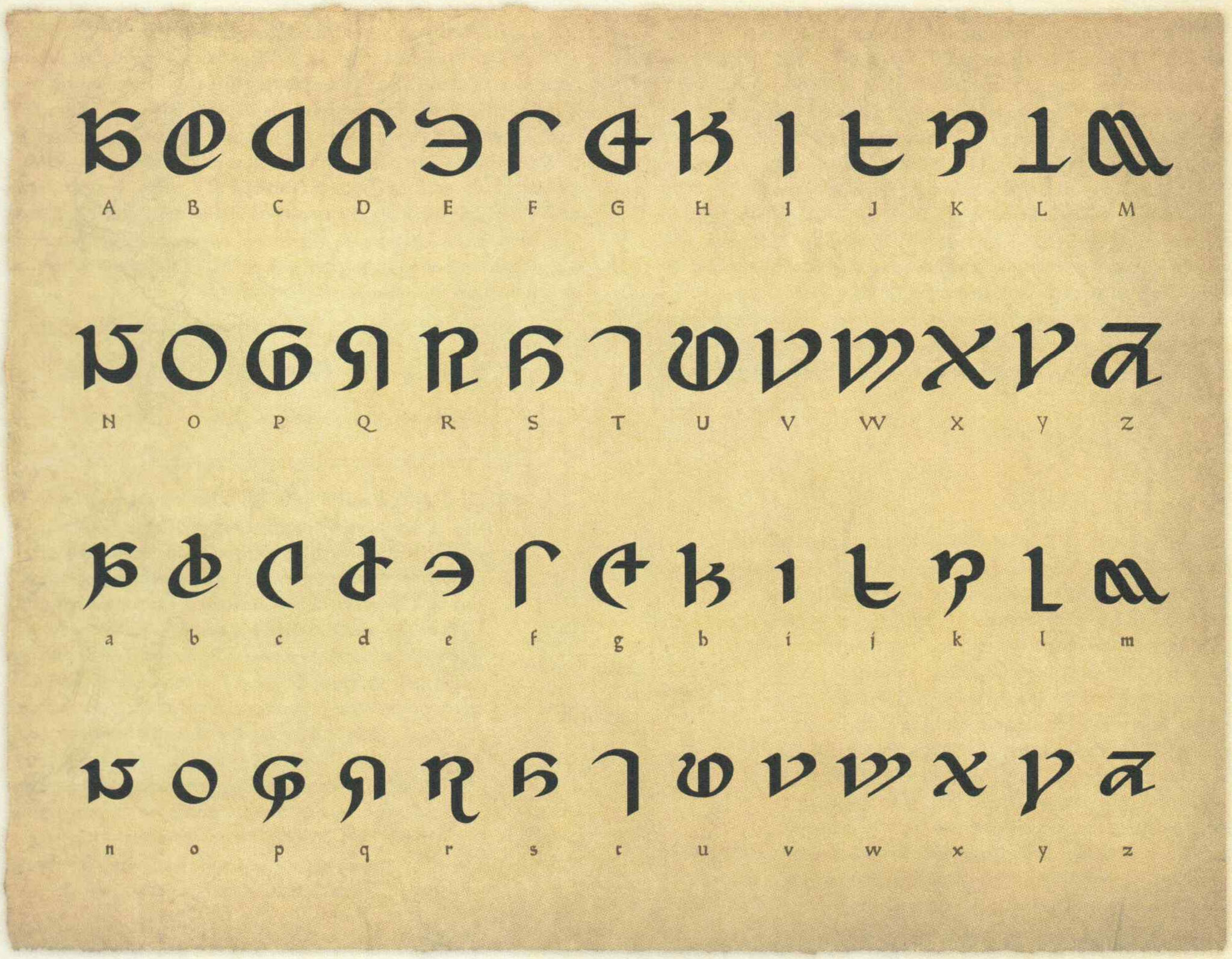
Though the Elezen fought to preserve their language against the vulgar tide, the plight was doomed with the arrival of Lalafellin traders from the southern seas. The Lalafells, more interested in coin than pride, quickly recognized there was profit to be had in learning the language of the Hyur. When the Miqo'te tribes followed suit, it was thus the Hyuran dialect became what we now know as Eorzean.

Having secured a strong foothold in Eorzea, the Lalafellin traders set their sights on Ilsabard and beyond, taking with them the simple, yet expressive Hyuran dialect that had seen their coffers full to bursting with gil, adding terms they thought necessary for haggling. It was through the efforts of these entrepreneurs that the language slowly spread, taking hold as the accepted parlance for negotiation. Now, it is not uncommon to see merchants from as far as Hingashi and Radz-at-Han handling their transactions in common Eorzean traders' cant.

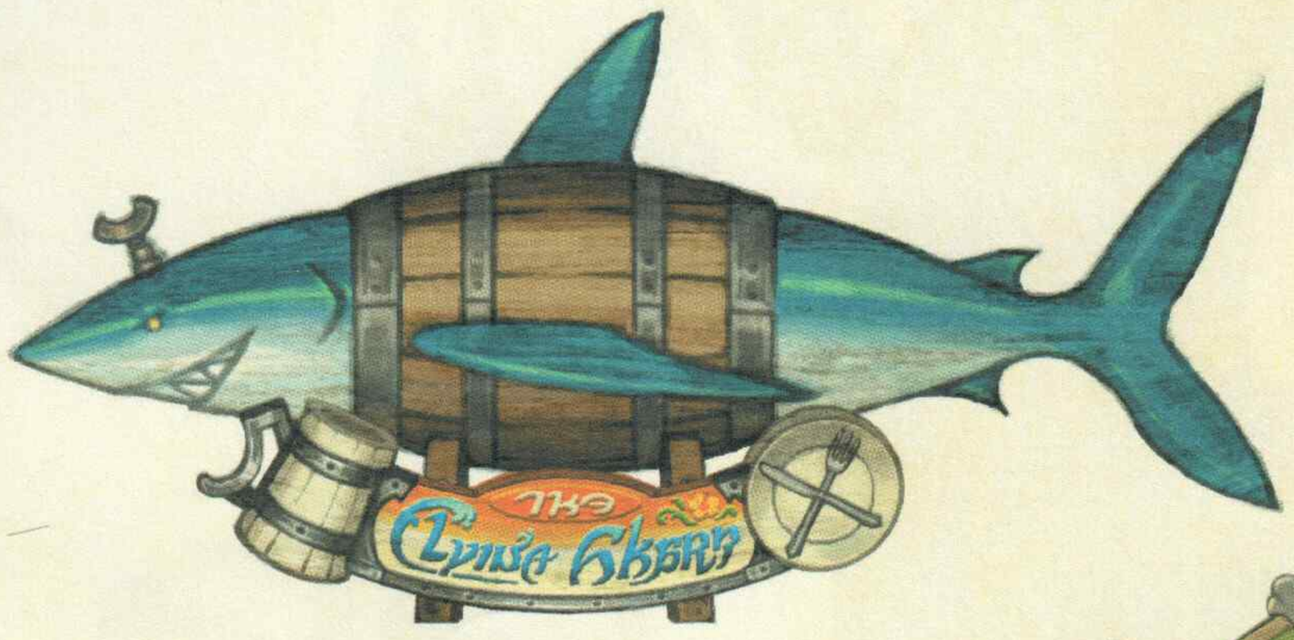
The proliferation of Eorzean throughout Hingashi has sparked somewhat of a cultural renaissance in the once-isolated nation. Access to a wealth of printed word carried overseas by Western traders has opened eyes to a new world of quirks and customs, oft resulting in a wholly unique amalgamation of ideas that would have proven impossible were it not for the common tongue. How an article on moogle legend printed in Gridania's *The Raven* led to the mass production of wooden mole-bats throughout the Far East is but one example of the undeniable power of language.

The Eorzean Alphabet

While the letters used during Allagan rule closely resemble those of modern Eorzean script, the sounds they represent today have been altered significantly with the passing of time. This diversion confused early linguistic scholars, leading them to believe they were reading an entirely independent language. It wasn't until the discovery of tomestones containing ancient audio recordings that similarities between Allagan and Eorzean were proven and scholars could come to the conclusion that at some point in history—most likely the Fourth Astral Era—all knowledge of letters was lost, only to be rediscovered and mistakenly repurposed in the Fifth.



The Eorzean alphabet consists of six and twenty letters which can be written in the upper and lower cases. The shape of some of the letters, as well as stroke order have given rise to the theory that the letters may have once been written with a left hand and from right to left instead of left to right.



It is estimated that little more than half of Eorzea's population can read or write Eorzean. And, among those who can, there is very little consensus on how things should be spelled, capitalized, or even punctuated, resulting in annoying variance when it comes to printed material.

Dragonspeak

Ishgard's recent efforts at reestablishing communication with the dragons has opened the door for a more in-depth study of the creatures' unique and ancient tongue. The following is taken from a dissertation penned by a Sharlayan student after spending several moons in Anyx Trine.

Brevity Is the Soul

If I were to describe dragonspeak in one word, it would be "economical". The dragons (more specifically, the First Brood) have had thousands of summers to trim the fat—whether it be from vocabulary, grammar, syntax, or even pronunciation. Multiple meanings have been consolidated into single terms and redundancies eliminated. Words have been shortened, simplified, or condensed to minimize oratory exertion. Instead of differences in meaning being represented by different words, inflection and breath patterns have become the norm. And then there is the simple fact that the beings who use this language have been doing so with the same partners for countless seasons. It is only expected that after communicating with someone for so long, both parties are, in a sense, able to anticipate what the other will say, further contributing to the abbreviation or omission of obsolete terms, as well as imparting even deeper meaning to words not spoken—the ultimate form of reading between the lines.

Unchanging

Languages such as Eorzean change over time as thousands upon thousands of individuals use and refine them. Those individuals eventually die after a few decades, and the next generation takes up the process of changing the language, moving it in directions the previous may not have even imagined. The path draconic takes, however, is largely dictated by the wyrms of the First Brood. These select few do not fade after a few decades, and while the language is passed down to their progeny, it is ultimately used to speak with the parents—parents who change little themselves. The result is a paradox in the sense that you have a language that exists in a form that can only be mastered by someone who has been exposed to it for thousands of years...making it difficult for any younger dragons to pick it up themselves, coupled with the unfortunate fact that the lifespan of the latter broods, while still significant, pales in comparison to that of the First.

Life and Death

One of the most basic and unique features of draconic is the presence or absence of life in each word. To the dragons, most words (with some exceptions, of course) represent a concept that either contains or is void of life. Words that are deemed to contain life, such as dragon, person, and flesh, will almost always contain a low-frequency nasal sound somewhere in them, whereas words without life, such as escape, sleep, and see, will always contain what can be best described as a wispy, breathy sound similar to lightly clearing ones throat—similar to the glottalic egressive aitch prevalent in Thavnairian. The former is represented in transcribed dragonspeak with an [n], the latter with an [h], to distinguish them from normal "n" and aitch sounds.

Dragon dra[n]	Person arr[n]	Flesh [n]esh
Escape e[h]sk	Sleep so[h]m	See [h]ess

What dragons consider to be life is not always as clear-cut as "living being" versus "inanimate object." For example, the word for death, mor[n], contains the life-representing [n]. While to us, death represents the absence of life, the dragons look at it as a part of life—something that would not exist without life—and therefore add that [n]. Another example is [n]oskh, or the word for ask. The dragons believe that life is a journey to search for the reason for existence, and that questions are what bring them closer to that goal. For the dragons, to question is to live. On the other hand, the word for sun, "soo[h]," does not contain an [n] despite being something that is considered by many cultures necessary for the cultivation of life. This is because the dragons—those of the First Brood, at least—believe that the sun is naught more than a sphere of energy providing heat and light from the heavens.

Look to the Past

There is next to no conjugation of verbs in dragonspeak—another sign of extreme efficiency. Where in Eorzean we have different forms to indicate past or present tense, as well as a compound structure to communicate future tense, dragons use the same word for all three—the only difference being the inhaling of breath while saying the verb to indicate future.

For example, let us take the word for eat—ee[h]s. The three forms are as follows:

Eat	ee[h]s
Ate	ee[h]s
Will Eat	[s]ee[h]s

The first two are spoken while breathing out, and pronounced like "east" minus the "t," with the middle of the word heavily aspirated (like the slight soughing of an autumn wind through slowly decaying leaves). The latter is spoken while breathing in—an action that, when performed by a dragon, creates a slight hissing sound that attaches itself to the front of the word. This is represented by [s] when transliterating.

So why is there seemingly no linguistic difference between past and present tense? The reasoning behind this decision lies in how dragons view time and causality. The dragons believe that the present is a culmination of everything that has occurred in the past, essentially making the two one and the same. To put it simply, when one has lived tens of thousands of years, what is happening now is indistinguishable from something that has happened before.

Order

The basic structure of a sentence is Verb - Object - Subject. Where in Eorzean we would say "The peiste ate the Lalafell," the dragons would say "Ate Lalafell peiste." This is one example as to how important action is to the dragons as opposed to the initiator of that action. Who or what ate the Lalafell is (relatively) unimportant. Immediately recognizing that "eating" has occurred readies the dragon to decide on an appropriate action in response.

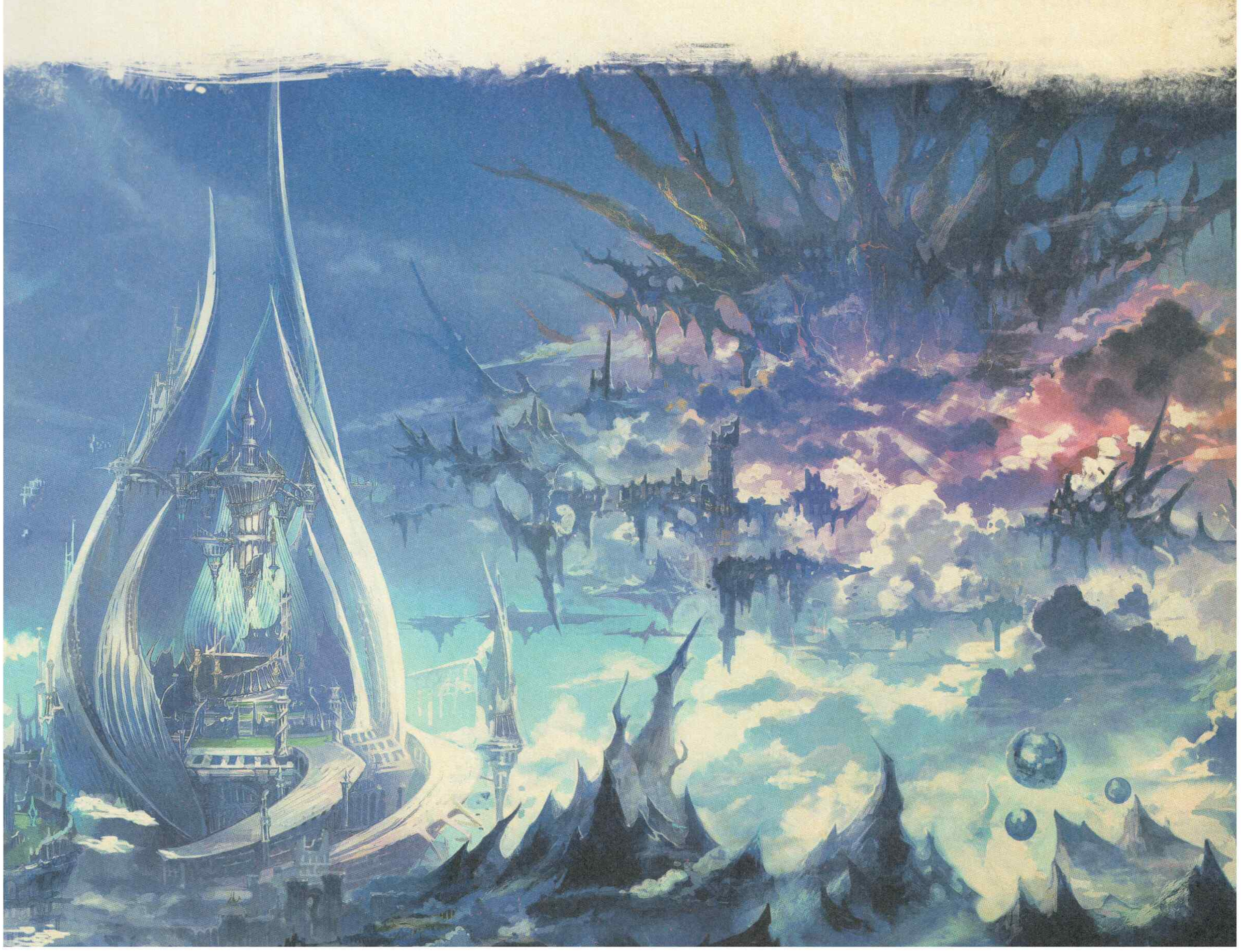
Adjectives and adverbs will almost always come after the word that they modify, again placing the importance on the action or the object of that action over the words that describe them. The sentence <The greedy peiste> [slowly ate] {the foolish Lalafell} would be constructed in dragonspeak as [Ate slowly] {Lalafell foolish} <peiste greedy>.

You also may notice the lack of articles in the dragonspeak rendition. This is because dragons no longer employ the articles a, an, or the, having come to view them as superfluous and bringing little to a sentence in the way of relevant meaning.

Similarities

Astute observers may have already picked up on the fact that some dragonspeak words appear similar to their Eorzean counterparts. Some scholars have even gone as far as claiming these similarities to Eorzean suggest that Eorzean languages may have a root in dragonspeak.

Draconic	Eorzean
r[h]ei	Pray
ta[h]i	Tie
wor[h]	War



Sylphic

Sylphs are one of the few beast tribes to have effectively renounced their ancestral tongue in favor of the language of those who took refuge in their domain—namely the founders of Gridania. Since the settlers' arrival, the sylphs have spoken in Eorzean, not only when communicating with the Hyur or the Elezen, but even amongst themselves. As to why the race was so quick to give up what can be considered part of their cultural heritage has puzzled scholars for decades; though one belief is that the sylphs do not place as much importance on the past as most civilizations, choosing instead to take advantage of the opportunities that the present offers. Quickly embracing the language of the outsiders ensured the "invaders" saw the sylphs in a favorable eye, and in turn protected them from any hostilities.

As the sylphs have no writing, the languages the tribe spoke before the arrival of the Black Shroud's current inhabitants are all but lost, the only remaining passages found in songs sung and passed down by Sylphland elders. Vestiges, however, of one former language—Old High Sylphic—still exhibit themselves in the sylphs' use of their adopted tongue. For example, the sylphs do not employ traditional personal pronouns—such as I, you, or she—and instead replaces them with the term "one" such as "this one" for the first person, and "wicked ones" or "adventuring ones" for second and third.

While the advent of the Seventh Umbral Era closed the hearts of many a sylph, before the Calamity, the tribe was known for their efforts to bring the myriad races of Eorzea together under a common cause—namely, the crystal trade. Founders of the Ashcrown Consortium, sylphs oft served as mediators between hostile parties, and it was their command of the common tongue that saw many a bloody conflict averted.

Amalj'aan

Much to the disbelief of many an Eorzean, the Amalj'aa have a highly complex, if not decidedly unique, tongue that belies their brutish outward appearances. While most standard languages call on the speaker to arrange linguistic building blocks into an order that will effectively relay information, Amalj'aan consists mainly of the speaker selecting from literally thousands of situation-specific four-part metaphoric compounds, and stringing appropriate examples together to paint a coherent, yet wholly abstract, picture of what he wishes to convey. As interpretation of these idiomatic phrases continues to expand, so do the number of situations in which they can be applied, meaning that each one is potentially loaded with connotations that can be emphasized or cancelled out by other phrases used in tandem. One Lalafellin scholar compares the experience of communicating in Amalj'aan to "standing amidst a score of surly septuagenarians slinging about age-old adages sans abandon."

Though grammar and syntax are quite dissimilar, distinct phonic similarities between the Amalj'aa and Mamool Ja tongues suggest their roots may be similar. The pronounced and decidedly abundant glottal stops prevalent in Amalj'aan (denoted in script with apostrophes), however, are almost nonexistent in the latter.

Sahagin

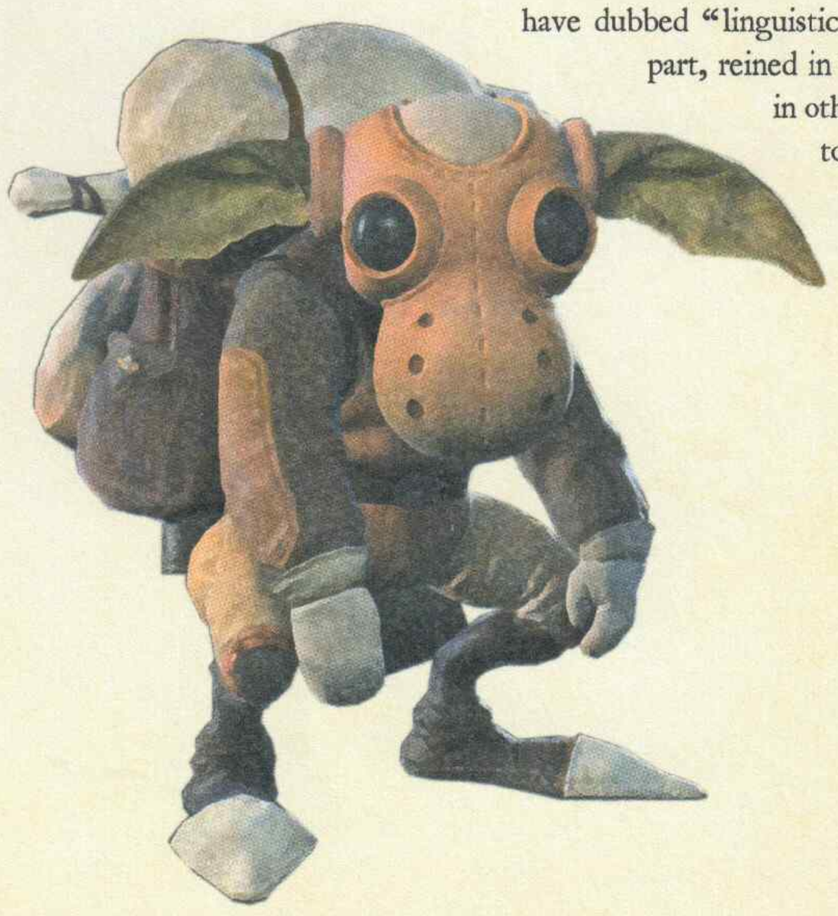
To the untrained ear, Sahaginspeak can seem naught more than an incoherent cacophony of sputtering and gurgling—the same as it does to the trained ear. This is because the Sahagin tongue is not meant to be spoken or heard in the same manner as Eorzean. The Sahagin, being sea-dwelling creatures, spend most of their adult lives underwater, and thus have developed a language that better suits that environment. Their burbling and hissing cause unique vibrations in the water which are detected by sensitive patches of skin under the Sahagin's arms and translated into words. The stronger the burble, the more far-reaching the resulting vibrations, or the Sahagin equivalent to a shout. It should be noted that the Sahagin—especially the youth, which spend a great deal of their development out of water—are not solely restricted to communication beneath the waves, as they have been observed utilizing a second form of brusque sibilant barks when on land. This second tongue, however, does not appear to be extensive, and is believed to be used only to relay simple commands. The pronounced amplification of these grunts can be attributed to the underdevelopment of the Sahagin's auditory organs.

The word Shposhae—the name of a cavern in lower La Noscea—is an example of a Sahagin word meant to be uttered underwater, yet spoken above, then transliterated by someone unversed in the beast tribe's tongue.

Goblin

Skilled traders, goblins have a knack for languages and, whenever possible, will conduct business in the tongue of their clients—a technique the goblins believe gives them an advantage in the dealings. As such, it was only natural that the wandering tribe was quick to pick up standard Eorzean parlance. Similar to Amalj'aan, gobbiespeak is heavy with compounds of two or more words strung together to form complex concepts; however, unlike how Amalj'aan strings its compounds together using a rigid formula, the language of the goblins employs an extremely loose grammatical framework that affords an abundance of freedom for improvisation—a unique syntax scholars have dubbed "linguistic chaos." This chaos is, for the most part, reined in when goblins attempt communication in other tongues, but conversations still tend to slow to a halt due to the beastmen's tendency to render their compounds in the target language.

Goblin	Eorzean
Trade Tongueflaps	Converse
Busydeals	Business
Endmakes	Murder
Backtake	Retrieve
Lustyeyes	Avarice
Uplander	Foreigner
Earcatch	Hear
Not Farsoon	Shortly



The establishment of Idyllshire—a modern utopia wherein man and goblin might live side by side—appears to have further affected the goblins' tongue. While one might presume regular exposure to common Eorzean would result in the goblins abandoning their wordcraft, it has, in fact, done the opposite, with more and more convoluted vocabulary being coined with each new "sunjump."

FAR EASTERN SCRIPT

While the Eorzean alphabet was gradually developing into that commonly used today,
far to the east, the letters of Nagxia, Yanxia, and beyond were experiencing a much different evolution.
This supplementary column will attempt to serve as an introduction to the peculiar script of the Far East.

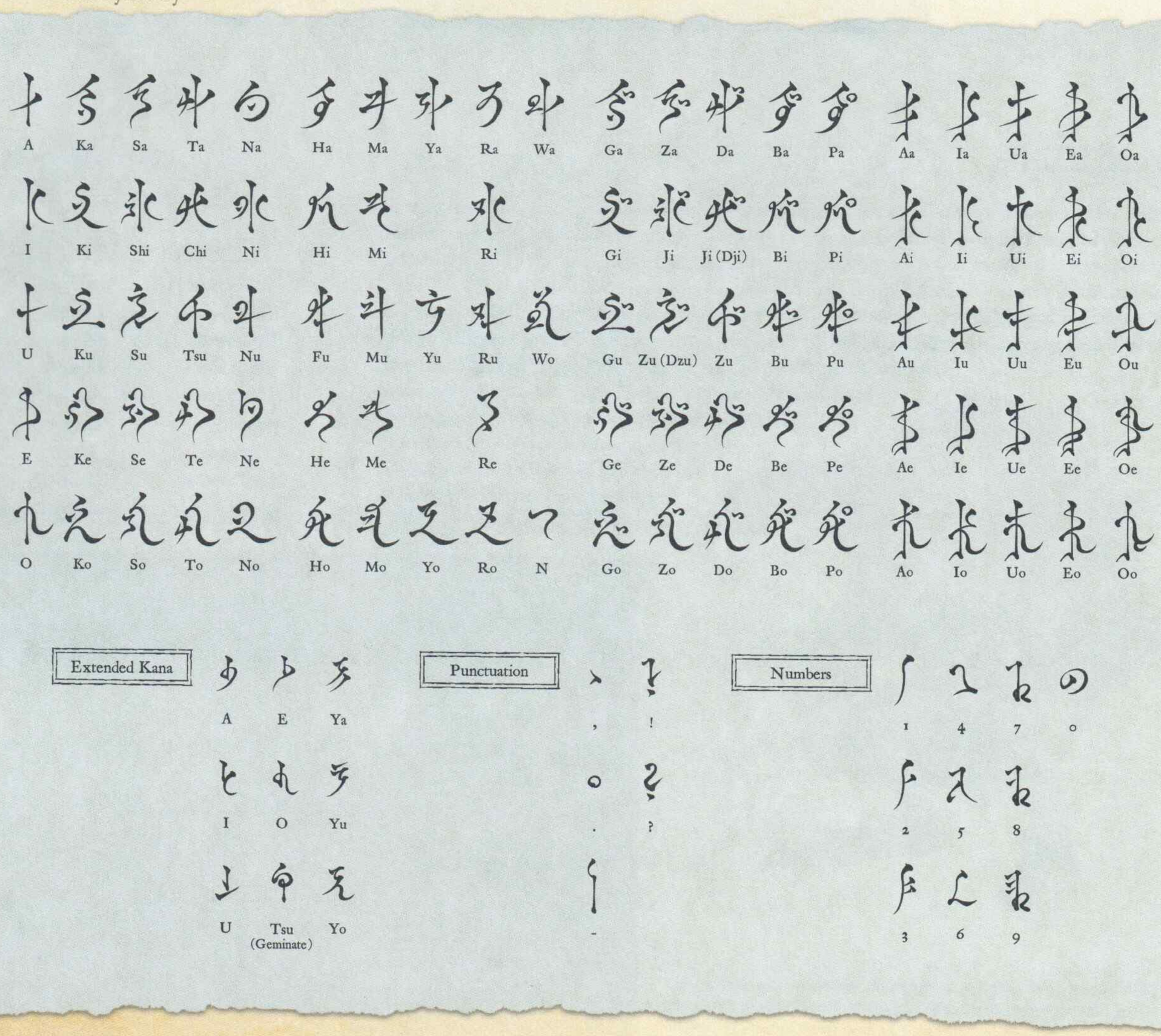
ORIGINS

The origins of Far Eastern script can be traced back almost two thousand years to a system of writing developed in ancient Yanxia. Unlike Eorzean, which employs letters (graphemes) to construct the literal representation of a word's pronunciation, Yanxian was made up of logograms—thousands upon thousands of unique characters representing individual words or parts of words (morphemes). A principal drawback of this system, however, was that literacy was dependent on the memorization of these countless characters, a task that proved impossible for all but the educated elite.

From Yanxian script slowly evolved a series of syllabic letters that removed the meaning from simplified renderings of older characters, while retaining their pronunciations. These new "kana" could be arranged much like the graphemes of Eorzean to form sounds and words, effectively reducing the number of characters to be put to memory from over ten thousand to approximately one hundred, and opening the door for the majority of Othardians to learn their letters.

Yanxian Characters

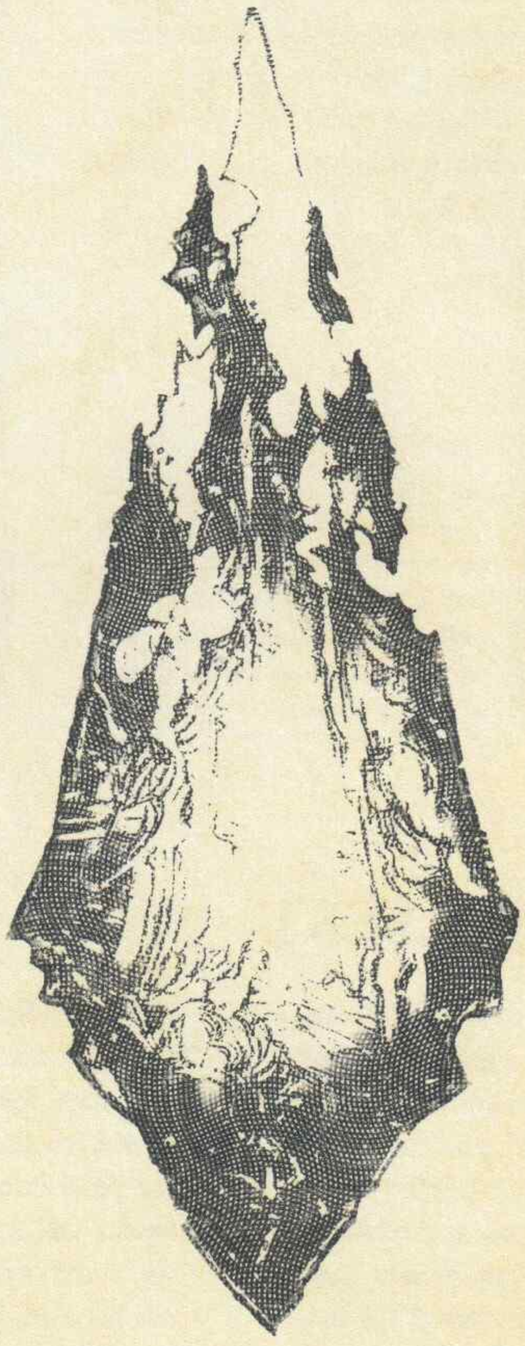
The Modern Syllabary



Encyclopædia Eorzea II

BOOK
II

HER TALES



SOUL SURRENDER

After a thousand years of bloodshed and sorrow, the shade of Nidhogg, rage incarnate, fell at last to the Warrior of Light and his allies. So it was that the Dragonsong War drew to a close, and the survivors, bloodied but unbowed, could begin to pick up the pieces. A new day dawned in Ishgard, and her champions were free to rest easy—albeit for only a moment. For every ending marks a new beginning.

Shadows of the First

In the wake of the Dragonsong War, Ser Aymeric de Borel, fresh from his appointment as lord speaker of the House of Lords, extended to the singular man (or woman, according to some) known as the Warrior of Light a formal invitation to dinner at his estate. By all accounts, the evening was a welcome respite for all, until it was cut short by the sudden arrival of Thancred, bearing Alisaie Leveilleur, Alphinaud's twin sister, who at one time decided to part ways with her brother.

Like the bard, Alisaie had been tracking the enigmatic Warriors of Darkness for some time. Alas, her efforts were rather less subtle than his, and Thancred was forced to spirit her away to Ishgard. Struck by a poisoned arrow as they fled, Alisaie teetered on the brink of death, but before being passed into the care of the chirurgeons, she mustered the strength to warn the Scions of Garuda's imminent summoning in Xelphatol—and of the Warriors of Darkness's plan to slay her. Fortunately, the Warrior of Light and his fellow adventurers beat them to the punch and laid low the Ixali occultist overseeing the summoning ritual, putting an end to the beastmen's ambitions.

Before the heroes of the hour could depart, however, they were confronted by the Warriors of Darkness, whose leader claimed that he and his comrades hailed from another world—a reflection of the Source—in which the power of Light was far greater than that of Dark. There, they easily bested their Ascian counterparts, only to discover that they had upset the primordial balance in the process, triggering a flood of Light which threatened to consume all that they sought to protect. If nothing was done, their world would soon give way to a void...as did the Thirteenth, when the Dark rose up unopposed. And so, to prevent this fate, they joined hands with the Ascians and came to the Source. Here, they intended to bring about another Umbral Calamity, for only through such unbridled destruction could the barriers between planes be broken down, and the First and the Source made one. Having said their piece, they took their leave, but not before reaffirming they would do whatever they could to save their world.

One of many Ixali works found upon the walls of Xelphatol's caverns, this charcoal painting of Garuda depicts her dancing gracefully with the wind. Any critic able to set aside their prejudices would certainly recognize the artistic merit in this celebration of celestial divinity.

Despair Made Manifest

The Scions were aware of the Ascians' renewed plot to furnish several beast tribes with a steady stream of crystals to facilitate summoning, and so began coordinating with the leadership of the allied nations to combat their efforts. Urianger Augurelt then informed his brethren of a rumor that the kobolds of Vylbrand were on the verge of summoning Titan once more, which spurred the Warrior of Light—as well as Alphinaud and a recovered Alisaie—to journey to Camp Overlook, where they were sought out by a young kobold of the 620th Order named Ga Bu.

The child beseeched the Scions and the Maelstrom to stop the patriarch from summoning Great Father Titan, and went on to explain that his parents, along with other like-minded kobolds, had spoken out against the leader's plans, only to be taken away to serve as "coke for the furnace." This ominous turn of phrase prompted Alisaie to recall tales of beastmen fashioning ritual foci from the bones of their brethren as a means to summon more powerful incarnations of their gods, and so fearing the worst, the Scions leaped into action and infiltrated the kobold stronghold to secure the crystals and free the prisoners.

Though they achieved a measure of success, the Scions breached the Navel too late to save Ga Bu's parents, and the sight of their bodies sent the child into a fit of despair. His wailing filled the chamber, growing louder and more intense, and then, as if in answer, the Lord of Crags was summoned forth from the aether. Strangely, the primal's words were not his own, but those of the distraught child pleading for his loved ones to be returned to him. Nevertheless, it was a threat which could not be ignored, and so the Warrior of Light and his comrades put the rampaging avatar of grief out of its misery. Alas, even though Titan was slain, the child Ga Bu was a broken shell, which led to the fear that he may have been tempered. Realizing she could do no more for him, Alisaie then gave Ga Bu into the care of the Maelstrom, but only after entreating them to show the child every kindness, in the hope that he might one day recover.

One Life for One World

Following the events in Vylbrand, the Scions identified the Ishgardian smugglers supplying the beast tribes with crystals as remnants of the criminal network established by Eline Roaille—the infamous Garlean spymaster, the Ivy. Troublingly, they had also recently aided a group of refugees known as the Masks, who were fervently devoted to the cause of Ala Mhigan liberation, and so the Scions journeyed to southern Thanalan to seek them out and discern their intentions.

At a public appearance, the Warrior of Light and Alphinaud took the measure of the Masks' leader, the Griffin. He was every bit the silver-tongued speaker, painting a picture of a homeland abandoned and of a people forsaken. His words conjured feelings of guilt, yet also offered the promise of redemption—of bloody retribution, and of glorious freedom, won with a power residing in the hearts of the brave and true. As the pair thought on his fiery words, they caught sight of the long-missing Yda and Papalymo, who after the fateful banquet in Ul'dah several moons ago, had slipped out of the city with the aid of the Resistance and escaped to Little Ala Mhigo, where they had remained to assist them with their operations by way of repayment.

After this joyous reunion, the Scions then arranged a meeting with the Griffin—or rather his double—who readily admitted to supplying the Amalj'aa with crystals in exchange for their aid in battle against the Garleans. Judging his words to be true, the Scions hastened to the Bowl of Embers, only to find there the bodies of countless Amalj'aa, and the Warriors of Darkness standing over them. This time, however, they were come not to slay a primal, but the Warrior of Light, in the belief that his death would plunge the realm into chaos and bring about another Umbral Calamity.

The battle between the Scions and their foes raged for a time, until the Warriors of Darkness unleashed a potent binding magic, all but sealing their victory. Before they could administer the coup de grâce, however, Urianger appeared from nowhere and broke the aetheric chains, revealing himself to have manipulated the Warriors of Darkness as a double agent. With the odds evened, the battle resumed.

When the dust finally settled, only the Scions were left standing. However, even in defeat, the Warriors of Darkness remained defiant, drawing forth Crystals of Light and proclaiming that that which is eternal cannot be defeated. It was then that Alphinaud realized the horrible truth: these desperate men and women of the First were already dead. Bowing his head, their leader declared that they were humble adventurers chosen by the Mothercrystal to serve as Warriors of Light. They did everything that was asked of them, and yet, for all their efforts, and all their many triumphs, their world still fell to ruin. With naught left to say, they raised their crystals high, resolved to withdraw that they might one day return to carry on the fight. Seeing this, however, Urianger enjoined the Warrior of Light to raise up his own crystal, and as it glowed brighter and brighter, its radiance began to blend with that of the others, until all was swallowed by incandescent, blinding white.

The Scions of the Seventh Dawn and the Warriors of Darkness opened their eyes to find themselves in the aetherial sea, a familiar voice echoing in their ears. As they struggled to comprehend what had happened, Urianger raised his hands to the heavens and cried out to Mother Hydaelyn, beseeching Her to grant them an audience with Minfilia in exchange for this bounty of Light. In answer, the Word of the Mother appeared and addressed the fallen heroes of the First, declaring that she would travel to their world and draw the abundant Light unto herself, thus redressing the balance. Driven mad by this seemingly impossible reversal of fortunes, their leader made to strike her down, but she stayed his charge with a gesture, assuring him that she spoke true, and that his world would not fall to Light.

Turning to her former comrades, she then spoke as Minfilia once more, thanking Urianger for allowing her to see so many of her dearest friends one last time. His voice quavering, the Archon confessed to having orchestrated events to grant Minfilia her freedom, that she might then use her newfound powers to prevent the First from being lost to the void. Though this revelation prompted outrage in the Scions, she reassured them that she was happy to have been given such an opportunity. As a final gesture, she then entrusted to them Louisoix's broken staff, Tupsimati, praying that they would never have need of it.

Their journey at an end, the broken Warriors of Light had a simple request: "Take us with you. Take us home." And so the Scions bade farewell to them, and to brave Minfilia, who promised that one day, when she had found a way to free this star of her sorrow, she would return, just as the Warrior of Light always returned from his many adventures.

THE FAR EDGE OF FATE

The threat of the Warriors of Darkness was no more. Unexpected reunions salved the ache of bittersweet farewells. And with their ranks further bolstered by the official induction of Alisaie and Krile, once more did the Scions of the Seventh Dawn set their feet upon fate's path and their gaze upon distant horizons.

Baelsar's Wall

As the Scions gathered to discuss the future of the organization, they were interrupted by the arrival of M'naago, a member of the Ala Mhigan Resistance. Between pained gasps, the wounded woman reported that the Griffin and his Masks were plotting to attack Baelsar's Wall, which marked the boundary between Gridania and occupied Ala Mhigo, and in so doing drag the Eorzean Alliance into conflict with the Empire. Hearing this, the Scions resolved to bear word of the looming threat to the city-state leaders, that they might decide upon a course of action.

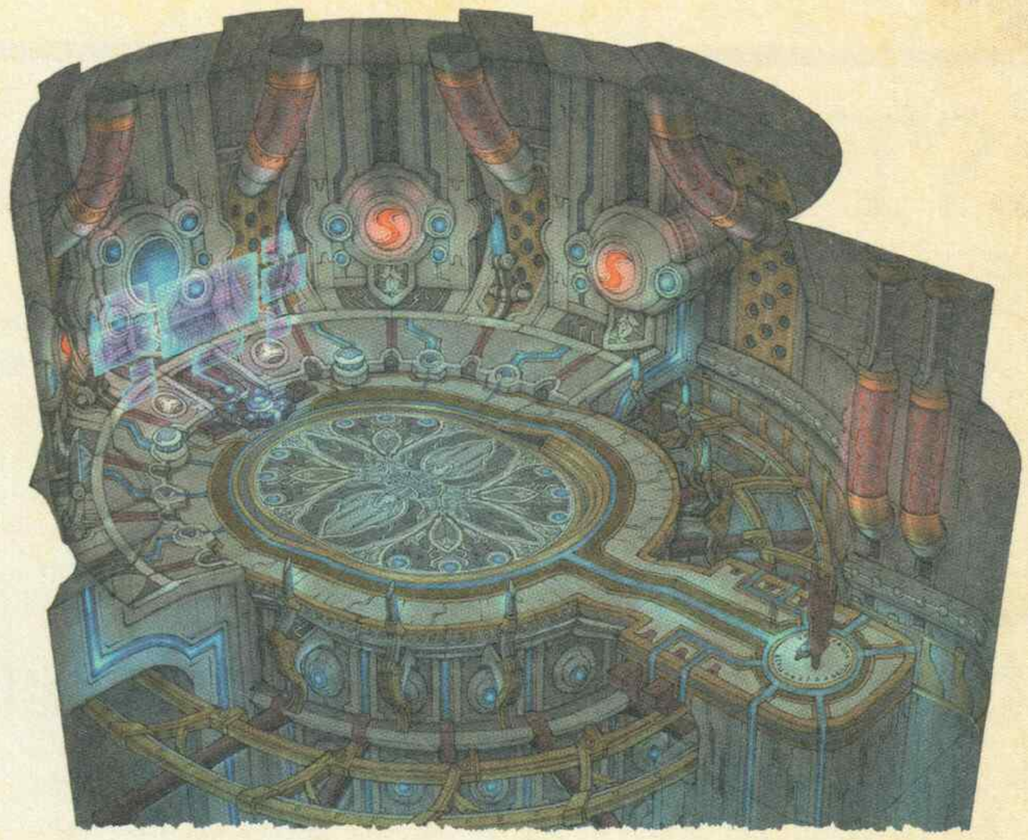
After weighing the possible consequences of the Griffin's reckless scheme, the council members—now joined by Ser Aymeric of Ishgard—agreed that the Gridanian border must be preemptively reinforced. With war now a distinct possibility, the mood was grim as the Alliance leaders dispersed to make their preparations.

An Ending to Mark a New Beginning

Hoping to convince the Griffin to abandon his course before war engulfed the realm, it was decided that Papalymo, Yda, Thancred, and Yugiri would brave the secret tunnels beneath Baelsar's Wall, and endeavor to confront the Resistance leader directly, while Alphinaud, the Warrior of Light, and his fellow adventurers would be held in reserve. Alas, scouts soon reported that the Griffin had begun his assault, his soldiers apparently clad in Grand Company uniforms. Plainly, the Resistance leader would stop at nothing to drag the Alliance into his conflict. The Warrior of Light and his comrades leaped into action, fighting their way through the fray to the top of the wall, where the Masks' leader was waiting to receive them.

Beneath the mask, the Griffin was revealed to be Ilberd Feare, the disgraced captain of the Crystal Braves. Following his "defeat," the Resistance leader enacted his true plan—a ritual to summon a nightmarish primal empowered by the desperation of his dying Ala Mhigan comrades and the might of Nidhogg's eyes. Declaring this moment to be an end to mark a new beginning, he leapt from the wall to his death, completing the ritual and birthing a being of pure violence. Fearing a disaster to rival the Calamity itself, Papalymo then stepped forward with Tupsimati, and grimly began to weave a forbidden magick of confinement. As the Warrior of Light and the others escaped aboard an airship, they could only watch as the incantation swallowed Papalymo and encased the newborn entity in a vast cocoon of light.

The Allagan Solution



The Griffin had played his final hand. By harnessing the wrath and despair of his dying countrymen did he give form to a new divinity; by the power of Nidhogg's eyes and his own mortal demise did he give it life. Only through the swift and desperate action of an Archon was the primal sealed away, but already the incarnation of vengeance strained to escape its prison of light.

As the council convened in Gridania to debate how best to combat this incalculable threat to all creation, an unexpected figure seized his moment to take the stage: Nero tol Scaeva. The disgraced imperial engineer proceeded to proffer what might kindly be termed a "bold" solution to the problem, and was duly ridiculed by Cid nan Garlond. The Alliance leaders, however, were not so quick to dismiss the man's proposal, anything being preferable to another Calamity, and they grudgingly agreed to send a contingent to the Carteneau Flats to awaken the infamous Allagan weapon known as "Omega."

In preparation for the coming operation, the Scions gathered in Mor Dhona. It was there that they were found by a boisterous traveler from the Far East named Gosetsu. Bearing dire news from Doma, the samurai had sought to persuade Yugiri to return to her homeland, but was instead convinced to join the mission to Carteneau upon hearing Nero mention that the Empire too had designs on the slumbering relic.

Indeed, Nero had spoken true, for in Carteneau they were challenged by a brutish Garlean soldier named Grynewaht and his unit. Rather predictably, Nero made his escape without hesitation, employing a teleporter to travel deeper into the facility, and Cid duly pursued him, leaving the small matter of winning the battle to the Warrior of Light and the others. After routing their imperial adversaries, the Scions pressed on into Omega's control room, where they found Cid and Nero hard at work priming the relic for action. In the end, though, it was Yda who finally took it upon herself to press the launch button. Initially, all seemed to be proceeding as planned...until the signal emanating from the weapon fell silent, prompting Cid to reengage its stasis systems.

It was not until the party returned to Gridania that they received from the gathered heads of state a full accounting of the events following Omega's launch. After a furious aerial battle in the skies above Gyr Abania, both it and the primal "Shinryu"—as Doman scouts had taken to calling it—crashed to the earth. Perhaps more importantly, however, the Alliance declared its intention to exploit the resulting confusion by moving to secure Baelsar's Wall.

When the Scions later convened to discuss the implications of this bold action, they turned their attention to the one among them still struggling to come to terms with Papalymo's death. As she looked on her stalwart comrades, the grieving pugilist came to a decision and confessed her great deception: that she was not Yda at all, but the fallen Archon's younger sister, Lyse. After the Garleans slew their father, who had been a leader in the revolution that overthrew King Theodoric, the two had fled to Sharlayan, where they met Louisoix Leveilleur. Though they had found a new home for themselves, Yda remained loyal to her people. Alas, during a mission to smuggle refugees out of Ala Mhigo, she was killed, and Lyse, not knowing how to cope, donned her mask in a misguided effort to carry on her sister's legacy. Having unburdened herself, she declared that she now knew the path she wanted to walk—that she wished to continue her family's fight and bring freedom to Ala Mhigo.

STORMBLOOD

Ilberd's assault on Baelsar's Wall and subsequent summoning of the primal Shinryu left the Eorzean Alliance with little choice but to occupy Castrum Oriens—an act almost certain to be interpreted as the prelude to a full-scale invasion. Yet if the Alliance was to go to war, it would not do so alone.

Beyond the Great Wall

General Raubahn Aldynn petitioned the Scions of the Seventh Dawn help him secure the support of the Ala Mhigan Resistance, that they might join forces with the Alliance and drive the legions of Garlemald from Eorzea once and for all. This formal request for aid was not unanticipated, and the Scions took little time to reach a consensus. To Ala Mhigo they would go—with Lyse Hext to lead the way, given her ties to the local insurgents.

Conrad Kemp, the commander of the Ala Mhigan Resistance in Rhalgr's Reach, received the delegation warmly, and listened patiently as Alphinaud explained the details of the Eorzean Alliance's proposal to together expel the imperial presence from Gyr Abania—or as Conrad wryly put it, "engage them by proxy" with the vastly inferior forces of the Resistance. While he and his officers were receptive to the arrangement, they required time to convince other factions. To make matters worse, many of their best and brightest had cast their lot with the Griffin and died at the Wall, and the leadership had been forced to fill their posts with the young and inexperienced—assuming they could fill them at all. If the Resistance was to be of any help in the future, the Scions would need to help them get back on their feet.

The Prodigal Daughter

Each member of the delegation set about finding ways to assist the rebels, including of course the Warrior of Light. He escorted a Resistance messenger to Castrum Oriens, who informed General Aldynn of their willingness to fight and weakened state. Hearing this, Vice Marshal Pipin Tarupin proposed a joint operation to rekindle the hope of the Ala Mhigan people and inspire them to rise up once more. So it was that the combined force of Alliance regulars and Resistance fighters ambushed a Garlean unit field-testing prototype magitek weapons—a unit led by Grynewaht, the brutish officer whom the Scions had faced on the Carteneau Flats when seeking out Omega. The weapons were swiftly destroyed, and as their commander fled, spitting curses and swearing vengeance, the victors raised a cheer to Ala Mhigo.

The Warrior of Light also accompanied Meffrid Noward and Lyse Hext to Ala Gannha, the young woman's birthplace, where they would attempt to find new recruits. Several youths from the village were said to have lost their lives at the Wall, and it was hoped that others might be sympathetic to the Resistance's cause. Alas, their deaths weighed heavily on the people's minds, and while they had no love for the Garleans, they were unwilling to risk further tragedy. Though some few were eventually inspired to join the fight after the Warrior of Light and his comrades rescued a villager waylaid by Qiqirn bandits, Lyse remained haunted by the realization of what had become of her home, and how little she understood their plight—as well as the sight of an innocent man being beaten by the Crania Lupi, a unit of Ala Mhigan youths indoctrinated by and loyal to Garlemald, and feared throughout Gyr Abania as the "Skulls."

The eldest son of Varis zos Galvus and crown prince of Garlemald, Zenos yae Galvus is a peerless warrior and master tactician. His exemplary record as legatus of the XIIth Legion earned him a reputation as a military genius, though several of his actions during the recent Doman and Ala Mhigan uprisings have led some to call this assessment into question.

In Crimson It Began

The Scions' efforts on behalf of the Resistance were bearing fruit. More Ala Mhigan recruits were arriving by the day, and Alphinaud returned with additional reinforcements—including one Arenvald Lentinus, an Echo-blessed adventurer of mixed heritage who had joined the Scions shortly before the Warrior of Light himself. Full glad was Conrad to receive these new allies, and once the recruits had received sufficient training, he proposed a joint assault on Castellum Velodyna to General Aldynn. Mindful that intelligence is the key to any successful operation, Pipin, Alphinaud, Alisaie, and the Warrior of Light embarked upon a reconnaissance mission to the cliffs north of the imperial installation.

Unbeknownst to the Alliance and the Resistance, Zenos yae Galvus, legatus of the XIIth Legion, imperial viceroy of Ala Mhigo, was poised to launch a surprise attack on Rhalgr's Reach. Though it remains unclear how he ascertained the stronghold's location—as it had remained hidden by powerful glamours for nigh on twenty years—it is widely speculated that imperial spies posing as recruits relayed the information to their allies. Regardless of how it was accomplished, historians would later agree that the swift strike carried out by an elite few nearly brought an end to the Resistance then and there.

Marshal Tarupin's reconnaissance mission was interrupted by the sound of cannon fire from the east, where he and the others spied a column of smoke rising from Rhalgr's Reach. Unable to contact their comrades via linkpearl, the party aborted their mission and raced back to the Resistance stronghold, fearing the worst. En route, they encountered a number of fleeing Resistance fighters, as well as Krile and Arenvald, who told of the chaos within the valley, of imperial soldiers cutting people down left and right, and of a last desperate stand by Conrad and the others.

Aided by his comrades, the Warrior of Light managed to beat back the imperial forces and reach the stronghold's heart. Though Lyse was unharmed and Conrad merely unconscious, Y'shtola was on the verge of death, her lifeblood pooling beneath her. The Warrior of Light then turned to confront the man who dealt the blow: Zenos yae Galvus, the imperial viceroy himself. Lamenting the disappointment at the level of opposition, he raised his blade and bade the adventurer entertain him.

Though he endured Zenos's onslaught far longer than Pipin and Alisaie, even Eorzea's hero was no match. With a flourish, the viceroy sent him flying—the only testament to the Warrior of Light's resilience the broken blade Zenos flung to the earth as he turned his back and walked away. Raubahn and his Immortal Flames arrived soon after, but as he had seen enough death for one day, he ordered his men to let the imperials withdraw and instead attend to the wounded.

Where the Streets Are Paved with Koban

Following the attack on Rhalgr's Reach, the bulk of the Resistance forces withdrew to Castrum Oriens to discuss their next plan of action. However, despite the swift intervention of the Scions and the Alliance, Conrad felt the fight was over. Not only had the imperials dealt them a crushing blow, they had used their own children, the Crania Lupi, against them—further underscoring how divided the people of Ala Mhigo were. Nevertheless, at the urging of M'naago and General Aldynn, he agreed to hold fast and rebuild while the Scions spearheaded a new, audacious plan: foment revolution in the Far Eastern imperial province of Doma, which was also subject to the rule of Zenos yae Galvus, thereby forcing him to fight a war on two fronts.

To this end, the Scions of the Seventh Dawn approached the leader of the notorious Lominsan pirates the Kraken's Arms, Captain Carvallain, and convinced him to transport several of their number aboard his flagship, the *Misery*. Other than a curious incident in which the ship was briefly detained in the Sirensong Sea, it is said that the voyage to the port city of Kugane in Hingashi was uneventful.

Trust and Betrayal

After parting ways with Carvallain and his crew, the Scions sought out the closest tavern that they might speak with the local Hingans and learn more of their new environs...only to be greeted by Hancock, a representative of the East Aldenard Trading Company and agent of Lolorito Nanarito in Kugane. At first, the Warrior of Light and his comrades regarded the man with considerable suspicion, but the merchant explained that he had been instructed by the oligarch to render assistance as an expression of his heartfelt contrition for the bloody banquet and the unpleasantness which followed. Recognizing that they could benefit from the wisdom of one so familiar with the political intricacies of Kugane, the Scions therefore elected to trust in Hancock for the time being and avail themselves of the Ruby Bazaar, the company's branch offices.

Their base of operations duly established, the Scions then began their search for Yugiri and Gosetsu. Prior to the commencement of joint operations in Gyr Abania, the pair had departed Eorzea to aid their Doman brethren in the fight for freedom. Therefore, if the Scions wished to make contact with the Doman Liberation Front, it made sense to utilize their mutual connections. Hancock confirmed that the Auri shinobi and the Roegadyn samurai had both arrived in Kugane, only to encounter difficulty securing passage across the Ruby Sea due to tensions between the Empire and the Confederacy, a pirate collective.

While asking after Yugiri and Gosetsu, the Warrior of Light and Lyse met Gyodo, a Namazu who claimed to have successfully made arrangements for the pair, and offered to do the same for the Scions—provided they could pay the rather steep fare. This was but a ruse to lure them into an imperial trap, though, and were it not for the timely intervention of the Blue Kojin trader, Soroban, their journey to Doma may have ended prematurely. The Scions successfully eluded their pursuers and returned to the Ruby Bazaar with Gyodo in tow, and after a brief interrogation learned that Gosetsu had never left Kugane, having been detained by the peacekeepers of the port, the Sekiseigumi. However, to everyone's surprise and delight, the samurai managed to win his freedom through a contest of strength mere moments before the Scions arrived to rescue him.

Gosetsu revealed that he and Yugiri parted ways some while ago, hoping to improve their chances of finding Lord Hien, the missing heir to the Doman throne. Even after it became clear that the rebellion was doomed, the young lord resolved to remain and fight on with Gosetsu at his side. Alas, in the ensuing chaos, the two became separated, and the samurai knew not what became of his master—only that he somehow survived, and that the Empire still sought to make an example of him.

Though Gosetsu was overjoyed at the prospect of returning to Othard with new allies, it was decided that it would not be prudent for all to continue onwards, and so Tataru and Alphinaud remained in Kugane, while the Warrior of Light, Lyse, Alisaie, and Gosetsu departed Hingashi aboard Soroban's boat and journeyed to the Ruby Sea.

To Bend with the Wind

The Scions first sought out the Confederates of Sakazuki that they might negotiate safe passage through their territory by paying the Ruby Tithe. While there, they bore witness to a dispute between Confederate scouts and an imperial officer in the company of Red Kojin mercenaries—an increasingly common occurrence in those days. Perhaps in recognition of the potential the Scions had to upset this distressing status quo, the Confederate Tansui allowed these new arrivals to forgo payment of the Ruby Tithe. So it was they continued onward and came ashore on the coast of Othard.

Agreements fulfilled and debts paid, the Scions parted ways with Soroban, and turned their attentions to Isari, a nearby fishing village, which they soon discovered to be occupied by imperial forces. From afar, they caught their first glimpse of Yotsuyu, the imperial viceroy, and Grynewaht of all people, who seemed none the worse for the trouncings they dealt him in Gyr Abania and Carteneau. To the disgust and horror of all, Yotsuyu forced one villager to execute another, before having him shot for refusing to kill his own parents.

Incensed, Gosetsu resolved to end the madness by surrendering himself into the viceroy's custody, reasoning that she would wish to question him thoroughly, giving the others time to formulate a rescue plan. Despite the Scions' protestations, the samurai would not be swayed. He bade the others seek aid at the tower on the isle of Onokoro and marched off, leaving them to watch helplessly as he was led away into the local tavern.

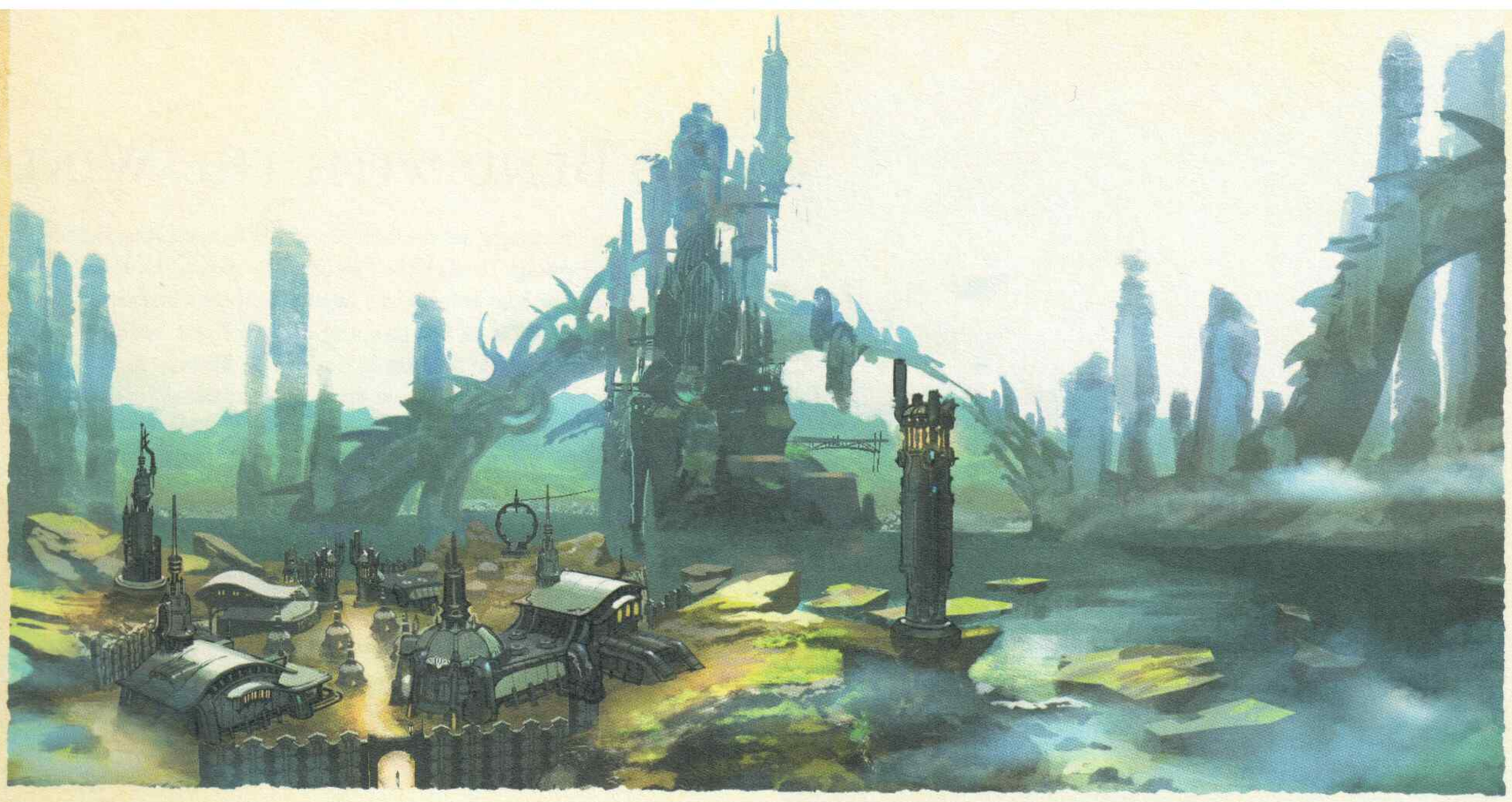
Heeding Gosetsu's advice, the Warrior of Light, Lyse, and Alisaie headed northeast and in the shadow of Heaven-on-High found a Confederate settlement, and obtained an audience with Rasho, their leader. Their impassioned pleas for aid failed to sway the taciturn pirate, but when Alisaie offered to deprive the Garleans of their Red Kojin allies in exchange for their cooperation, Rasho agreed.

The Lord of the Revel

While all Kojin labored to obtain sacred treasures in which the kami, divine spirits, were believed to reside, only the Red did so by serving the Empire as mercenaries, whereas the Blue relied on their talents as traders. Therefore, to carry out their seemingly impossible mission, the Scions sought the counsel of the Kojin of the Blue on the Isle of Bekko, and were there reunited with Soroban, who guided them to the underwater village of Tamamizu. The chieftain, Bunchin, told them of the divisions between the two factions—of how the Red were forced to hide their faith from their Garlean masters, and how the Blue considered theirs to be a twisted and misguided path. He and his would support the Scions' cause, but in exchange they would have to recover a priceless relic: the Yasakani-no-Magatama, which lay somewhere at the bottom of the Ruby Sea.

That they might carry out their search, Soroban performed a ritual to imbue the three surface dwellers with the blessing of the kami, allowing them to breathe underwater as they would on land. Thus empowered, the Warrior of Light and his comrades journeyed to Sui-no-Sato, another underwater village said to be the sanctuary of the Raen. Though rebuffed by its leader, they were aided by none other than the parents of the shinobi Yugiri Mistwalker, who furnished them with a lamp with which they located and recovered the Yasakani-no-Magatama.

On their return to Tamamizu, Bunchin furnished the Scions with a ceremonial knife that would grant them access to the Kojin treasure vault on the Isle of Zekki, and bade them deliver the sacred jewel unto it. Of course, as they would be doing so unannounced, the Red Kojin would hasten to the isle, abandoning their imperial posts and leaving the imperials to fend for themselves. Sure enough, the Scions' efforts to wreak havoc exceeded all expectations. Unfortunately, for reasons beyond their knowing, two of the sacred treasures stored in the isle's vault "reacted" to the presence of the Yasakani-no-Magatama, calling forth from the aether the great kami Susano—a primal by another name. Fortunately, the Warrior of Light and the Echo-blessed companions he had the wisdom and foresight to bring with him rose to the occasion and slew the great kami. This turn of events would also serve to drive a permanent wedge between the Red Kojin and the Garlean Empire, which could never condone an act of summoning.



A Glimpse of Madness

Following their escape from the Isle of Zekki, the Warrior of Light, Lyse, and Alisaie returned to Isari and found that owing to the timely intervention of Confederate forces, Yotsuyu and her imperials had been driven from Isari, and their former captives managed to survive their ordeal. Though Gosetsu was clearly still troubled by the injuries he sustained from Grynewaht's brutal interrogation, the party resolved to carry on and resume their journey to Yanxia.

Zenos had no desire to remain in Doma after he crushed the rebellion, and so he named Yotsuyu to serve in his stead. The acting viceroy waged an indiscriminate campaign of terror, marching into villages without warning and committing unspeakable atrocities in the name of rooting out "radical elements." After a time, these purges ceased, but the memory remained, and with it the promise of punishment should the people resist. Since there was little need for imperial patrols, the Scions entered into the heart of Doma undetected.

After a brief visit to the village of Namai, Gosetsu led the Scions to the hidden headquarters of the Doman Liberation Front, the House of the Fierce. There they were greeted by Yugiri, who told them of how she had found Lord Hien, the missing heir to the throne, on the Azim Steppe. However, the young samurai was unwilling to return until he knew whether the Doman people wished to rise up once more, or submit to imperial rule.

Though frustrated by his declaration, Yugiri and the others had no choice but to respect his wishes and attempt to ascertain the truth of Doma's heart. Their efforts to do so were complicated when, to their dismay, a squadron of soldiers marched into Namai and told the gathered people of the battle between Confederate and imperial forces in Isari, declaring it a brazen, unconscionable act that would not go unanswered. Announcing that some would be required to serve the Garleans in rudimentary support roles for an indeterminate period of time, the pilus prior began to select villagers one by one. Powerless to intervene without endangering the lives of the distraught locals, Yugiri and her comrades could only watch from the shadows as the soldiers departed with their hostages.

Together with the Warrior of Light, Yugiri tracked the villagers to Fluminis, and after incapacitating their captors the shinobi urged them to flee. After decades of oppression, however, many of them could not even begin to fathom defying the Empire, and were terrified by the suggestion. Ultimately, they agreed to return to their homes, after Yugiri bade them tell the imperials whatever was necessary to keep their loved ones safe should they come asking questions.

The Will to Live

Yugiri and the Warrior of Light had little time to dwell on these troubling events, for in the distance they spied a massive imperial airship, which upon their return to the House of the Fierce they confirmed was that of Zenos yae Galvus himself. Over the protestations of her comrades, the shinobi resolved to assassinate him, and together with the Warrior of Light formulated a plan to ambush him near Yuzuka Manor.

As before at the Reach, Zenos was a force of nature, relentless and unstoppable. Yet the Warrior of Light had grown stronger, and for a time it seemed as though he might have a chance...until the prince brought a new katana to bear against him, the Ame-no-Habakiri. At once, his body began to crackle with a crimson energy, which burst forth and felled both Yugiri and the viceroy's few remaining soldiers, and the Warrior of Light soon after.

As he stood over him in judgment, Zenos at last recognized the "champion of the savages" in Ala Mhigo. Discarding his damaged helmet, he implored him to live on, to endure, to grow stronger, and to face him once more, before whirling about and putting an end to a last desperate attempt by Yugiri to kill him. He advanced to finish her off, but paused when confronted by a group of armed villagers, as well as Gosetsu and Alisaie, who were determined to save the ninja's life. It was a touching display of defiance, albeit one surely doomed to fail... Nevertheless, Zenos withdrew without a word, leaving the Warrior of Light and his comrades free to nurse their wounds.

Though this attempt on Zenos's life ended in failure, it spurred the people of Doma to rise up and openly oppose the imperials in battle. Convinced that this was the sign that Lord Hien had been waiting for, Gosetsu and Yugiri, together with the Scions, embarked on a journey to the Azim Steppe to seek out the young heir and convince him to return to lead his people in a new rebellion against the Empire.

An Impossible Dream

The search for the missing heir of Doma lead the party to Cirina, a young woman of the Mol tribe. Long ago, guided by a vision received by her grandmother, she ventured into the southern mountains and there found Hien, near death. Cirina brought the Doman lord to her village, where they nursed him back to health, and there he resolved to remain until such time as he could repay his debt to them. With her assistance, Gosetsu and Yugiri were reunited with their liege, but though they told him of Doma's rekindled spirits, Hien stated that he could not go home until he had won the ceremonial battle known as the Naadam and thereby earned the right to bid the Xaela follow him to Doma—a daunting but necessary task given the Liberation Front's depleted forces. Reluctantly, Yugiri departed to deliver the news to her comrades in the south, leaving the Warrior of Light, Lyse, and Gosetsu to assist Lord Hien in his bold endeavor.

That they might participate in the Naadam and fight alongside the Mol, the four needed to first be recognized as warriors of the Steppe. To this end, they would need to complete a rite of passage in which they walked in the footsteps of the legendary hero, Bardam. Though traditionally one is expected to undertake this trial alone, there is some speculation that they may have benefitted from outside help. All that can be said with certainty is that each eventually emerged from the grounds having tamed a yol in the traditional fashion, thereby proving themselves worthy warriors of the Steppe.

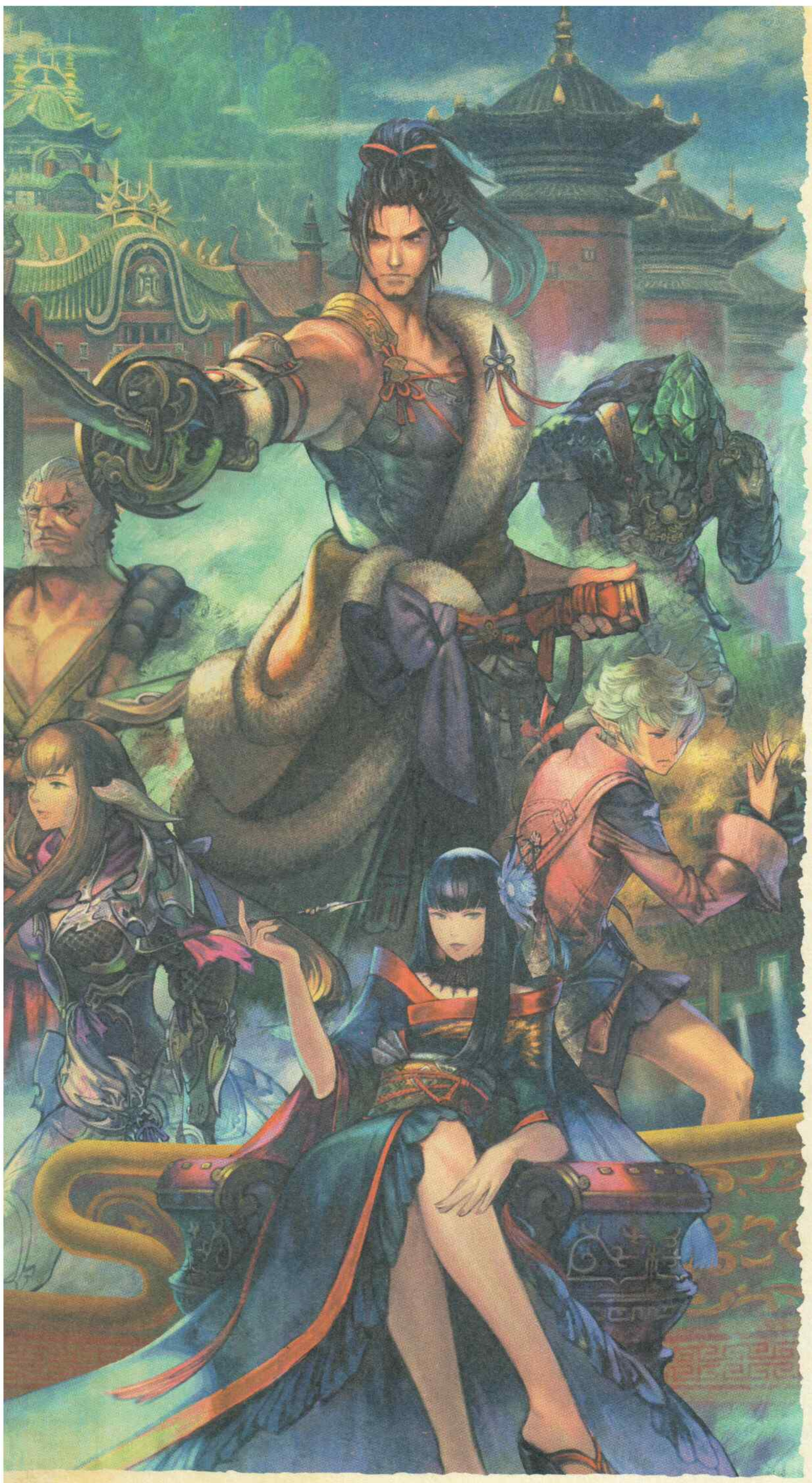
A Season for War

Before the four could rejoice in their accomplishment, however, they found themselves surrounded by a party of Oronir, their leader demanding that they return with him to meet with his khan. Hien considered this an opportunity to learn more of his foes and soon-to-be allies, and so he and the others agreed to follow the Oronir to the Dawn Throne, where they met with the most radiant brother Magnai.

Magnai grudgingly recognized the travelers as warriors of the Steppe—but there his respect ended. He demanded that they acknowledge his supreme authority and pay tribute, and when Lyse and Hien balked at his presumption, his flash of anger made clear that it would be wiser to humor the Oronir...for the time being. As prisoners of the tribe, they were coerced into performing menial tasks as expressions of tribute, culminating with a mission to reconnoiter the encampment of the Dotharl, bitter rivals of the Oronir. There, the Warrior of Light and Gosetsu learned much of Dotharli customs, and their belief that the soul of one who dies in battle burns bright and is reborn—a sentiment in which the old samurai took a measure of comfort.

On the eve of the Naadam, Magnai released the travelers and bade them return to the Mol to make ready for the coming contest. And so, with the rising of the sun and the scattering of the sacred earth by the Gharl, the tribes of the Steppe raced to meet one another in battle. Soon the soil of one and all was awash with Xaela blood. Yet somehow, from that crimson tempest emerged a victor. As the ovoo evaporated into motes of fading light, the Warrior of Light stood a khagan crowned.

There was no time to celebrate the Mol's triumph in the Naadam, for Grynewaht suddenly appeared at the head of an imperial squadron, and declared his intention to kill the dearest of all his enemies, the Warrior of Light. Yet in coming a moment too late, he faced a Steppe united. With the aid of the Oronir and the Dotharl, the khagan and his allies slew the invaders and sent Grynewaht on his way once more. But this was only the beginning of their alliance, for Hien succeeded in convincing the two tribes to travel south with him and fight for Doma's liberation.



On the Eve of Destiny

In anticipation of Lord Hien's triumphant return, Alphinaud developed a comprehensive strategy to retake Doma Castle. After Lyse and the Doman irregulars carried out a series of diversionary attacks, the Xaela would launch a surprise attack on the castle's airborne defenses. The twins and the shinobi would then disable the magitek field generators within the Dairyu Moon Gates, allowing the Confederate and Kojin naval forces to bombard the castle and secure the Doman Enclave. Finally, Lord Hien's main host would advance upon the castle and deal with the imperial forces within.

Yet to win a war, one must be willing to do whatever is required, even if it means sacrificing the very thing one set out to reclaim. Thus did Lord Hien revise Alphinaud's plan and declare that Kojin sappers would destroy the underwater foundations of the Doma Castle's outer walls, that the One River might flood the fortress, eliminate the greater portion of the imperial garrison, and trap Yotsuyu within the keep.

The World Turned Upside Down

Every stage of the plan was carried out to perfection, from the diversionary attacks to the Kojin's underwater demolition. From Monzen, Hien and the other leaders observed as the river rushed into Doma Castle, drowning countless soldiers within. The stage had been set for the main host to play their part. To increase their chances of reaching Yotsuyu, Hien proposed that they split into two groups. He, Gosetsu, and Yugiri comprised one, while the Warror of Light and his fellow adventurers would comprise the other. All steeled themselves for a mighty struggle, knowing full well that the fate of a nation would be decided that day.

In the bowels of Doma Castle, the Warrior of Light was greeted by an old friend: Grynewaht, driven mad by his quest for vengeance, and transformed into a twisted mass of steel and flesh. But whatever agonies he endured to gain his newfound strength, they were all for naught. After a pitched battle, he crumpled to the ground, never to rise again.

Yotsuyu goe Brutus was waiting at the top of the keep. Invited to plead her case, she spoke of the many ways in which she was wronged by her countrymen...and of the joy she one day found in their suffering. Listening to her tale, one could almost begin to pity her...but in truth, she was only stalling for time. Unrepentant to the last, she gleefully revealed her plan to bring the keep down on everyone's heads in a final suicidal act of defiance. With a thunderous roar, the ceiling came crashing in, but when the dust finally settled, the Warrior of Light and his comrades remained unharmed, for Gosetsu, blessed with indomitable strength as he was, had somehow managed to shield them from a massive piece of debris that threatened to crush them. Alas, Yotsuyu too had survived, as they learned when she fired upon the samurai, not stopping until her pistol was spent. As Gosetsu struggled to remain standing, he implored the others to leave while they still could. And so, astride Xaela yol, they made their escape from the crumbling keep as it sank beneath the water.

The castle had fallen, and the imperial occupation of Doma was at an end. But what of Gosetsu? Was there truly no hope? Alphinaud was unwilling to assume the worst, and bade Soroban search the ruin. Though he found no body, at the time it seemed all but impossible to think that the samurai could have survived. Difficult though it was, the Scions and their allies knew that they must look to the future, and so they went to the enclave to meet with the Domans who had fought valiantly for their freedom and were waiting to receive their lord.

Hien had been raised to rule, and so the language of leadership came naturally to him. But when faced with the prospect of addressing his countrymen in the wake of their victory, he hesitated, until spurred by the Warrior of Light to rise to the occasion. As he and the other Scions looked on, the lord of Doma implored his countrymen not to grow complacent, for the true challenge lay in the days ahead, when they must come together to rebuild their broken nation. Judging from the faces of the gathered men and women, there was little reason to doubt that they would.

Rhalgr's Beacon

Truly, there was no rest for the righteous, as the Scions could ill afford to remain in Doma and enjoy their victory. Gyr Abania still suffered under the rule of Zenos yae Galvus, and it was imperative that they return to the West with all possible haste. Upon their return, they were distressed to learn that Krile Baldesion, who was being escorted by Arenvald and other Resistance troops while transporting Y'shtola and other wounded to the Rising Stones, had been abducted by the Skulls near the Gridanian border. Though Arenvald and the others failed to protect her, through the power of the Echo he glimpsed the memories of their commander, Fordola, and saw that Zenos yae Galvus himself had ordered them to return with Krile alive—though he knew not why.

After their lengthy absence, the Alliance and Resistance leaders were eager to hear a recounting of the Scions' activities in the Far East, and so the Scions shared with them the many trials and tribulations, culminating with the liberation of Doma—news of which had already begun to spread throughout the Empire, leading to unrest and unease within the imperial ranks. The Alliance and Resistance duly decided that it was the time to strike. They would resume their campaign to retake Ala Mhigo, beginning with the capture of Castellum Velodyna.

The Warrior of Light joined the Resistance forces gathered at the ruins of Castellum Corvi to await the signal from the Alliance. Once General Aldynn and his men lured the bulk of the garrison away from Velodyna, they were to make for the bridge and engage the remaining defenders. Yet this too would be but a feint, as the success of the operation rested on the shoulders of M'naago, who would fly to the top of the castellum with the aid of her griffin, and there employ a number of modified glamour prisms to create the illusion that the massive imperial banner had been replaced by that of the Resistance. The sight of the banner would serve to sow chaos and confusion in the imperial ranks, if all went to plan, allowing the Allied forces to rout the enemy and claim Castellum Velodyna at last.

Every unit played their part to perfection. When M'naago blew her horn to draw all eyes heavensward, the imperials began to break and run, believing the day lost. Fordola rem Lupis, commander of the Crania Lupi, having remained at the bridge, urged her men to stand their ground, but soon retreated herself after realizing there was naught to be done. At Conrad's urging, Lyse let her go, for while capturing the Skulls' commander would represent a fine achievement, the greater goal had been accomplished: Castellum Velodyna was theirs. Ala Mhigo was not built in a single day, and neither would it be liberated in one. But the fall of the castellum marked a turning point in the campaign, for the imperials had been all but driven from the Fringes.

The Lady of Bliss

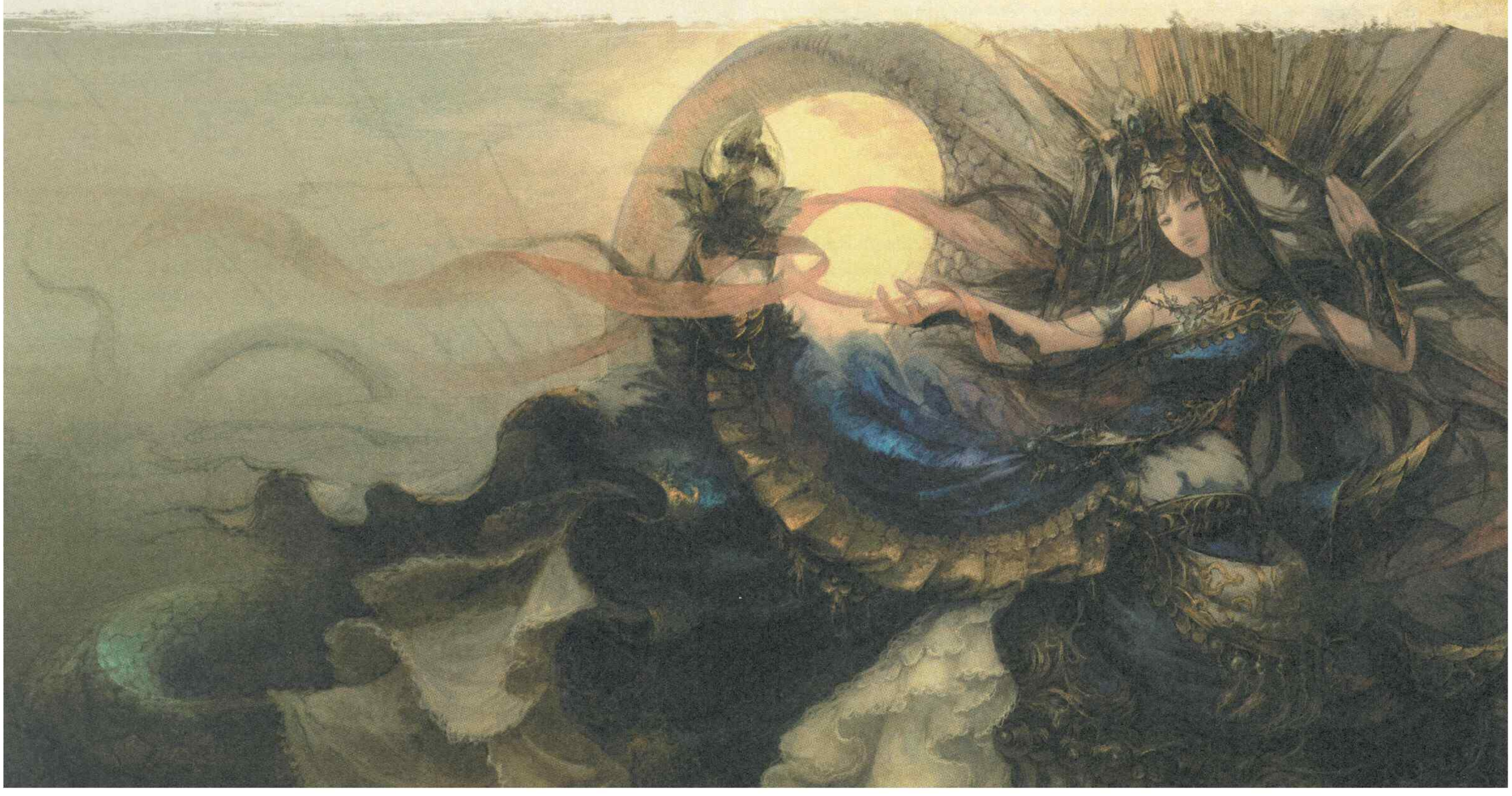
While allied forces took a moment to rest and regroup, the Scions traveled with M'naago to the Peering Stones, home of the M tribe and where the Resistance officer was born. While there, they were approached by a Vira messenger, who told them that when the Skulls were withdrawing from Velodyna, they were confronted by the Qalyana broodmother. She had come with a contingent of warriors to reclaim her daughter, who had been taken as a hostage. Alas, the tense standoff gave way to violence in which the child was cut down by Fordola's Skulls before her mother's very eyes.

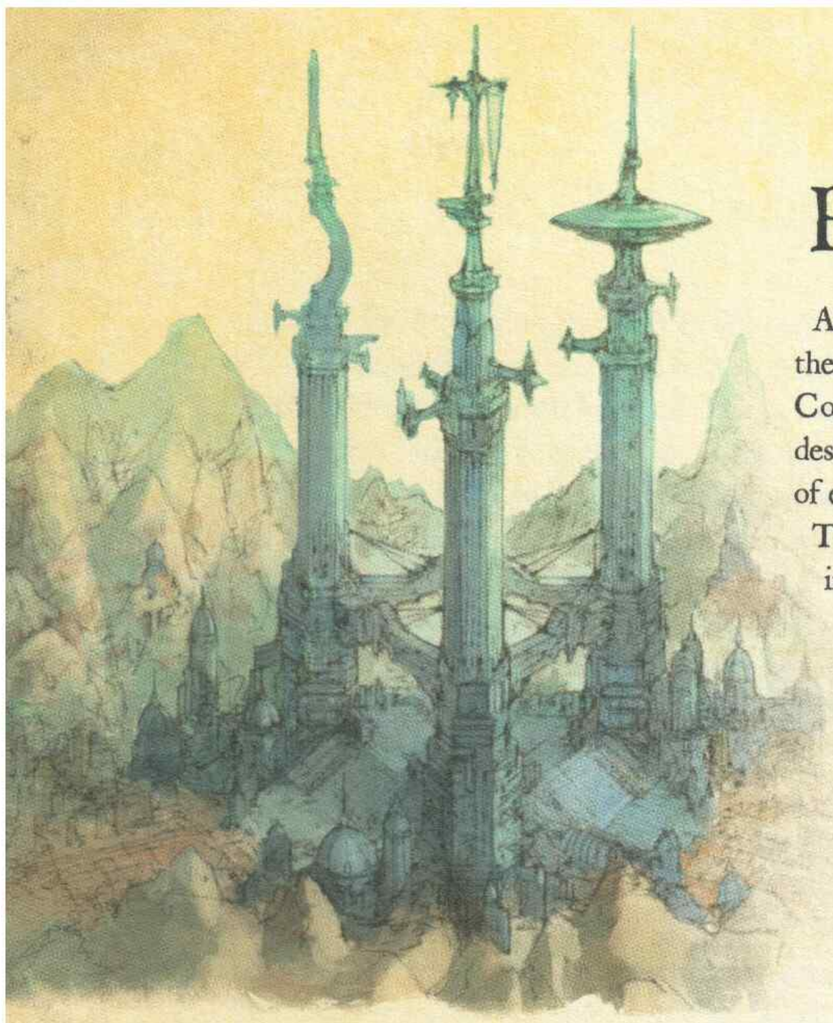
The Qalyana broodmother cried out to the heavens in despair...and a primal answered. Sri Lakshmi, patron deity of the Ananta, came forth from the aether, and the imperials were put to flight. Alas, the tale did not end there, for the Qalyana then demanded the Vira come and pay tribute to the goddess. And so it fell to the Warrior of Light and his comrades to journey unto the Qalyana stronghold of Djanan Qhat, where Sri Lakshmi held court.

From the shadows, the Scions looked on as Sri Lakshmi impassively explained to the distraught Qalyana broodmother that while she could restore her daughter's flesh to life, her soul was forever lost. This forlorn spectacle was but one of countless tragedies in the cycle of misery perpetuated by the primals, the sight of which filled Alisaie with anger, who, forsaking all concealment, proceeded to loudly decry Sri Lakshmi for her empty promises, before begging the Qalyana to see her for the false goddess she was. Alas, the broodmother would not listen, and the primal soon took umbrage. With a wave of her hand, she sent orbs of energy towards the Scions as a warning: leave her lands and her dreamers be.

Twice had Alisaie watched helplessly as those consumed by tragedy turned to primals for succor. Yet though she could do no more for the broodmother than she could for Ga Bu, she believed she had to try. However, her failure left the Warrior of Light with no recourse but to meet the primal in combat—ably abetted by his cadre of Echo-blessed adventurers.

Afterwards, as the Warrior of Light told Lyse of the primal's passing, the Qalyana broodmother appeared, bereft at the death of her goddess. Though Lyse tried to reason with the grieving mother, she condemned the Scions and their actions, demanding at last that they leave her to mourn.





Hells Open, Heavens Weep

After securing a foothold in the Peaks by seizing Ala Ghiri, the Eorzean Alliance and the Resistance set their sights on the next logical target: Specula Imperatoris. And so a great host, led by General Aldynn and Commander Kemp, laid siege to the towers. But when the massive cannon at Castrum Abania was used to destroy the main tower of Specula Imperatoris, killing countless Allied and imperial troops, it was plain the rules of engagement had changed.

The Warrior of Light and Alisaie Leveilleur, who had been held in reserve, rushed to what was left of the imperial fortress to learn what had become of her brother and the others. Amidst the debris, they found several Alliance soldiers and helped them to the best of their ability. Yet for every man they could save, there were many more they could not.

Finally, the pair found Lyse, M'naago, and Alphinaud tending to Conrad, who lay motionless upon the ground. Though the others escaped with only minor injuries, the grizzled commander's wounds were unquestionably mortal. He used his final moments to implore Lyse to succeed him as leader of the Ala Mhigan Resistance, and she tearfully accepted, promising to lead their countrymen to freedom. Safe in the knowledge that his legacy was secure, Conrad Kemp smiled and breathed his last.

The Price of Freedom

The Alliance and the Resistance could not suffer a repeat of the slaughter at Specula Imperatoris. As such, they would not march upon Castrum Abania until they could be certain the fortress's main cannon would not be brought to bear against them. Though the weapon was apparently disabled by a single unknown assailant, it was only a matter of time before it would be restored to operational status. With the aid of an Alliance contact in Radiata, the Scions devised a plan to infiltrate the castrum and seize control of the cannon's fire control center, after which they would signal the Allied forces to advance.

Once more they split into several parties—one comprising Alphinaud and Alisaie, and a second the Warrior of Light and his irrepressible adventurer allies. Each created a diversion inside the castrum, thereby allowing Lyse and her unit of Resistance fighters to proceed relatively unhindered to the fire control center.

All forces converged upon the center and there came face-to-face with the officer responsible for the destruction of Specula Imperatoris: Fordola rem Lupis. She made no apologies for her actions and declared that all was in service to her countrymen—to secure a place for them within imperial society. Enraged, Lyse charged with murder in her eyes, only to find that her opponent possessed supernatural strength and agility. After effortlessly evading her attacks and cutting down Alisaie with a single stroke, Fordola dove through the window and made her escape, but not before extending to the Warrior of Light and his comrades an invitation to the "royal hunt" on behalf of Zenos yae Galvus. With nothing to fear from the fortress's dormant cannon, Allied forces marched on Castrum Abania and seized control of it in short order. Save for Alisaie's injuries—which would heal in time—the operation went exactly to plan.

Liberty or Death

Lyse, having but recently assumed leadership of the Ala Mhigan Resistance, continued to struggle with the weight of her new responsibilities. Seeing this, Raubahn invited her and the Warrior of Light to accompany

him to Coldhearth, a poor village of little consequence, which he revealed to be his childhood home. There he told them of his life before the imperial occupation, when he returned from the front to mend and first heard the words of a revolutionary firebrand.

By the power of the Echo, the Warrior of Light was cast adrift in a memory of Raubahn's past, where he observed Lyse's father deliver a speech to a crowd of cheering Ala Mhigans—among them, Raubahn Aldynn and Ilberd Feare, then dear friends. Afterwards, the revolutionary met with Raubahn and counseled him to remember that freedom should not be an end in of itself, for it is but a chance to build something better... and the work is never finished.

"Liberty or Death," Raubahn repeated: the creed of Curtis Hext and his comrades. Solemnly, he asked Lyse if she would swear by these words, and she did so—though she was quick to add that the liberty she craves must be for every son and daughter of Ala Mhigo, even those who reject the cause. The nation they build must serve as a home for them all, she insisted, and Raubahn could only agree.

The Resonant

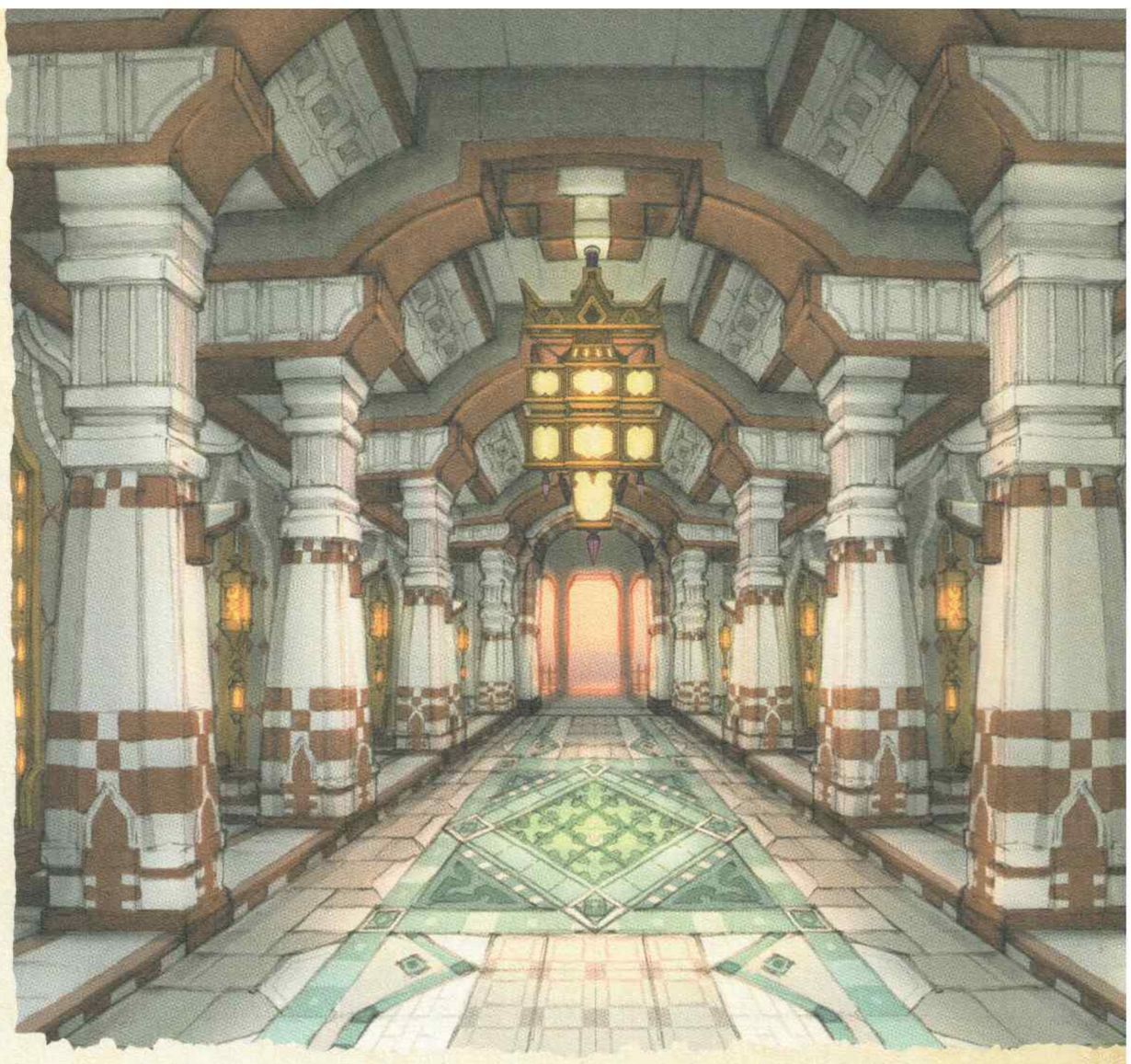
At Porta Praetoria, the leaders of the Alliance and the Resistance discussed their plans for laying siege to Ala Mhigo and defeating the XIIth Legion once and for all. Time being of the essence, it was decided that as soon as the Resistance secured the residential district to the south of the city, the main host would immediately launch an all-out assault. The Scions, meanwhile, would be held in reserve, ready to render aid where needed, and attend to Krile's rescue upon learning where she was being held.

Fortunately, that opportunity would come sooner than later, as Thancred Waters had already successfully infiltrated the residential district and tracked Krile to the ruins of an old temple of the Fist of Rhalgr, within which the imperials had constructed a research facility. In their pursuit of a means to imbue Garleans with the power to manipulate aether, the scientists had apparently performed questionable experiments on a number of living subjects—and Krile had been abducted for this selfsame purpose.

In order to gain entry to the Ala Mhigan Quarter and infiltrate the imperial research facility, the Scions needed to find a way to circumvent the towering walls and heavy gates which surrounded it. Fortunately, Wiscar—a youth from Ala Gannha whom the Warrior of Light inspired to join the Resistance—had surmised the existence of a tunnel connecting Loch Seld and a well within the district. Just as the party was about to dive into the loch, though, Urianger made an unexpected appearance, and explained that after listening to Alisaie's tale of her defeat at Fordola's hands, he had been inspired to fashion a new and improved aetheric siphon, which he believed would enable them to deprive the Skulls' commander of her preternatural prescience.

As expected, Fordola was waiting to greet them in the facility, along with a squadron of imperial soldiers. Thankfully, however, upon activating Urianger's device, the Skulls' commander reeled about in confusion, and it soon became clear that she could no longer anticipate the Scions' attacks. Though she was yet a fearsome opponent, after a vicious battle, the Scions were able to subdue her and secure the facility.

To everyone's relief, they found Krile alive, albeit weak from her ordeal, and together made ready to leave, with Fordola as their prisoner. However, the beaten officer belittled the Scions' victory, speaking of the terrible powers Zenos commanded and the futility of their sacrifices. For an instant, it seemed as though Lyse would succumb to her anger and execute her defenseless foe, but in the end she relented, declaring that Fordola would live long enough to see a free Ala Mhigo.



The Measure of His Reach

After a brief encounter with the Ferae Domitae, a unit of Doman conscripts which the Scions convinced to withdraw, the main host gathered outside the gates to the city, and the assault began in earnest. All proceeded as planned until a unit of airborne magitek armor launched a counterattack, throwing the Allied forces into chaos. Moments later, however, their Far Eastern allies, led by Lord Hien, swooped in to the rescue, engaged the imperial flying machines, and left the Alliance free to resume their attack. The gate buckled under the renewed assault, and soon gave way. Thus began the battle for the future of a nation. Together with the brave men and women of the Eorzean Alliance and the Resistance, the Warrior of Light and his fellow adventurers entered the city and made for the castle where Zenos yae Galvus resided, that they might put an end to his reign of terror.

Twice before, the Warrior of Light had faced Zenos yae Galvus, and twice before he had lost. But the third time proved different. The viceroy faltered and withdrew, and subsequently erupted into maniacal laughter. At long last, the hero had become the beast he longed to face, and so he bade the Warrior of Light join him at the top of the Royal Palace, where the gods might bear witness to their dance.

In the Royal Menagerie, the Warrior of Light was greeted by a terrible sight: Shinryu, Ilberd's draconic god of vengeance, at the mercy of the viceroy. Zenos fawned over the primal, which he proclaimed a being of pure violence, and mused upon how instrumental the Warrior of Light was in its creation and capture. He proceeded to mock his great-grandfather's legacy, while hinting at his own dark ambitions, at last declaring that all he did, he did but for the joy of doing it—that only man has the wisdom and the clarity to embrace violence for its own sake. His manifesto thus delivered, Zenos freed Shinryu from its restraints and cried out defiantly as it bathed him and the Warrior of Light in dragon fire. Unscathed, he rose into the air and used his power as a Resonant to merge with the primal, binding it to his will. As he towered over his prey, transformed, he glimpsed Ilberd's final moments, and declared this to be "an ending to mark a new beginning," before taking to the air.

One day the world may be consumed by fire and blood, and all that men hold dear be forever lost. But it was not this day, for Zenos yae Galvus, legatus of the XIIth Legion, imperial viceroy of Ala Mhigo, was ultimately defeated by the Warrior of Light and his companions.

Zenos, returned to his true form, then struggled to his feet, coughing blood. To the astonishment of all, he claimed to be filled with a joy he had never known, for he had experienced a moment unlike any other: clear and pure and real. He brought a blade to his neck and smiled the smile of a man at peace, and before Lyse could intervene, the deed was done. Zenos yae Galvus was dead. Though Lyse was initially reluctant to celebrate, Hien urged her to raise a cheer for all those who fought for freedom. And so the Warrior of Light, together with his many comrades and the leaders of the Eorzean Alliance and the Resistance, gathered at the castle's ramparts, and as the horns spread tidings of the viceroy's death, the people of Ala Mhigo raised their voices in song.

THE LEGEND RETURNS

The liberation of Ala Mhigo signaled the end of an era of tyranny. On the cusp of a new age of freedom, her people had to decide how they would greet their future and reconcile with their past. What path lay ahead for Lyse and her efforts to rebuild the nation? What choices plagued Fordola from within her prison cell? And to where would Raubahn return, now that the dream for his homeland had at last become a reality?

The Mad King's Trove

Following Ala Mhigo's liberation, Lyse Hext and the Resistance struggled to address one key issue: leadership. There was no obvious candidate to lead the newly liberated Ala Mhigo. Everyone needed to have a say in the matter, and so despite having returned to Rhalgr's Reach for a time, Lyse was needed in the city. The Warrior of Light was half-inclined to join her, if only to offer moral support, until Arenvald dangled the promise of new adventure before him.

In the days before his fall, King Theodoric was reputed to have hoarded the personal wealth of his executed kinsmen, but not a single coin of this fabled fortune had ever been found. Needless to say, Arenvald was determined that he, Alphinaud, and the Warrior of Light should be the ones to uncover the mad king's trove. After performing a cursory investigation, the three surmised that it might be somewhere within the submerged remnants of the ancient city of Skalla at the bottom of Loch Seld. Retrieving it would be no easy task, however, as they also believed Theodoric had his kinsmen cursed and cast into the depths not only to punish them for their imagined crimes, but to have them serve as guardians over his treasures.

While scouring the depths of Loch Seld, they discovered a passage leading directly beneath the palace foundations. Such a find warranted further investigation, and while they were briefly separated during their search, the adventurers managed to overcome the monstrous denizens of Skalla and find the fabled treasure of the mad king.

Arenvald had not embarked upon this quest for gold or glory, but because he knew all too well what poverty and hunger could do to a person. With Theodoric's gold, he hoped to spare his countrymen the shame of living as he had. On his return, he implored Lyse to use it to alleviate the suffering of Ala Mhigo's poor, and with Alphinaud's assistance, she would do just that.

Portrait of the mad king Theodoric, recovered from the treasure trove within the Drowned City of Skalla.

At the bottom of Loch Seld lie the ruins of Skalla, an ancient city said to have thrived during the Fifth Astral Era, until its destruction in a terrible war and subsequent disappearance in the great flood that was the Sixth Umbral Calamity.

The Resonatorium, where Krile Baldesion was held for a time, was a research facility where scientists attempted to imbue test subjects with an artificial recreation of the Echo. Said subjects were referred to as "the Resonant."

The Butcher's Blood

Passion and rage had brought the Ala Mhigan people to their feet and carried them to victory. But now that the war is over, all the unspent fury was being channeled into vengeance. Mobs formed to target those who had cooperated with the Garleans—at first to harass and insult, until someone resorted to violence.

Fordola rem Lupis, former commander of the Crania Lupi, was another target for those seeking to punish collaborators in the name of justice. Though she and her soldiers had aspired to be imperial citizens, they were born Ala Mhigan, and to their countrymen, they were traitors of the worst kind. When word spread of her captivity, an angry mob gathered to demand her immediate execution. At this critical juncture, however, Lyse feared that sending Fordola and other prominent prisoners to the gallows would only encourage the people to purge their society of any and all believed tainted.

Raubahn Aldynn then addressed the crowd and told them that now was the time they must decide what manner of nation they would build for themselves, and for generations yet unborn. Would their children's children remember them as a people who held fast to their principles, or one who cast them aside when tried? Fortunately, his words served to quell his kinsmen's rage, if only for a time.

Despite this unrest, there was much cause to be hopeful for the nation's future. Not only would the poorest among them benefit from the treasure found in the ruins of Skalla, but Nanamo Ul Namo, with the support of Lord Lolorito, delivered a proposal to the interim government that they work together to redevelop the Saltery in a joint effort that would enrich Ala Mhigo and Ul'dah.

A Home for All

Lyse was determined to build a country where everyone, regardless of race or origin, could live side by side in peace, and to that end, she organized a summit in which refugee and village leaders, as well as representatives of the beast tribes, would gather to decide Ala Mhigo's future. As a gesture of respect, an invitation was extended to the Qalyana, who had summoned Sri Lakshmi, with the expectation that they would refuse. To the surprise of all, however, a contingent came to Ala Mhigo, and so were allowed to take part.

Alas, in the midst of the meeting, the Qalyana broodmother somehow summoned forth another incarnation of Sri Lakshmi, plunging the throne room into chaos. Too late all realized that the guards entrusted with keeping the area free of crystals had themselves been enthralled. As the only warriors present blessed with the protection of the Echo, the Warrior of Light and Arenvald occupied the primal whilst their companions defended the visiting envoys from the Qalyana and the enthralled guards.

Try as they might, however, the need to protect their allies from the primal's baleful influence rendered them powerless to wrest the initiative from their foe—until, that is, Fordola arrived to even the odds. The three engaged Sri Lakshmi together, and succeeded at last in banishing her to the aether. The battle was over, but the Butcher still stood before the Scions, free of her fetters, weapon in hand...which she then cast to the ground before returning to her cell of her own accord.

With the danger passed, Lyse and the envoys resumed their meeting, and eventually came to the decision to form an elected government. This would have marked the end of General Aldynn's time in Ala Mhigo had Nanamo not subsequently dismissed him as leader of the Immortal Flames and stripped him of his seat on the Syndicate in an act of kindness that left Ala Mhigo's dearest son free to return home for good.

So it was that Lyse declared her time as commander of the Resistance over, and that she would invite Raubahn to take her place. With Nanamo's project to resettle Ala Mhigan refugees also proceeding apace, all agreed that the seeds of hope had at last begun to quicken in the war-torn land.

RISE OF A NEW SUN

Thanks to the Warrior of Light's heroic deeds and Raubahn's long-awaited return, Ala Mhigo continued its steady march towards recovery. Yet there was no rest for the Scions of the Seventh Dawn, for the winds of trouble were blowing from the Far East, where an unexpected spark threatened to set the kindling of chaos ablaze.

Tidings from the East

The newly formed council governing Ala Mhigo and headed by Raubahn Aldynn was well positioned to lead the fledgling republic into the future. Therefore, when Hancock of the East Aldenard Trading Company sent word from distant Kugane that he had acquired information of great interest to the Scions, they were ready and willing to answer his summons. On their arrival, he informed them that individuals resembling Gosetsu and Yotsuyu had been but recently seen walking the streets of Kugane. Though the Scions struggled to comprehend how they could possibly have escaped Doma Castle alive, the fact remained that the Garleans were sufficiently convinced to dispatch a sizable contingent of soldiers to hunt them down. Never one to leave a comrade at an enemy's mercy, the Warrior of Light agreed to join Yugiri in her quest for the truth.

Through none other than Gyodo, the Namazu who unwisely betrayed them to the Empire during their first visit to Kugane, the Scions learned that an elderly Roegadyn samurai had recently sold a katana of surpassing craftsmanship to a pawnbroker on Kogane Dori. Shortly after Alphinaud, in his folly, purchased the katana with Scion funds, Gyodo informed them that the imperial contingent charged with finding Yotsuyu was preparing to deploy to the Ruby Sea, plainly in the belief that their quarry was bound for Doma. The Scions duly followed, and while at the Ruby Price, chaos erupted when the Empire launched an attack against the nearby Confederate stronghold on Sakazuki. Wasting no time, they hastened to join the defensive effort, and were soon reunited with a familiar figure—Gosetsu. Without breaking stride, the Warrior of Light hurled himself between the old samurai and his assailants, and at length succeeded in beating them back. Having dealt with the immediate danger, the Scions then turned their attention to their ailing comrade and his unlikely traveling companion.

At Alphinaud's prompting, Gosetsu recounted the miraculous tale of his survival. When the keep collapsed around them, he and Yotsuyu plunged into the One River and were swept out to sea, where they drifted for days before finally coming to rest on the shore of a desert island. Though she came through the ordeal whole of body, Yotsuyu awoke bereft of her memory, and Gosetsu, unable to decide her fate, resolved to deliver her to Hien for his judgment.

Storm on the Horizon

Lord Hien welcomed his dear friend and loyal retainer with open arms, but knew not what to do with the former viceroy. Even if Tsuyu, as Gosetsu had named her, had forgotten who she was, the people of Doma had not, and she could not be permitted to roam free. Hien declared that she would be detained in secret while he deliberated a course of action.

However, the question of Yotsuyu's fate would have to wait, for the Empire was on the move once more—an imperial airship had been sighted near Castrum Fluminis. Curiously, the airship's occupants used traditional Doman smoke signals to communicate peaceful intentions, prompting Lord Hien and his retinue to greet the occupants under a flag of truce. So it was that they were met by Asahi sas Brutus, ambassador plenipotentiary of Garlemald—heir to the Naeuri clan and Yotsuyu's adoptive brother.

The Picture of Civility

Asahi claimed to be a member of the Populares, a political faction within Garlemald that represented the interests of the common man and sought to reform the Empire's provincial policy. Varis zos Galvus had personally sanctioned his mission, granting him the authority to speak with the Emperor's voice, and with it he sought to negotiate a peace treaty with Doma, provided they formally renounce the practice of summoning. Lord Hien and the others could not help but regard these statements with skepticism, yet the ambassador assured them he spoke true, and in the spirit of building trust, proposed an exchange of prisoners—including his adoptive sister, Yotsuyu. The attempt to retrieve her made by imperial forces in Sakazuki had been ordered by the Optimates, a conservative faction of pure-blooded Garleans which stood in opposition to the Populares, and Asahi posited that securing her return by peaceable means would strengthen his party's position. Nevertheless, such a decision could not be made lightly, and so Hien invited Asahi to remain in Doma as an honored guest while he considered his offer.

While Lord Hien deliberated over the proposed prisoner exchange, Asahi wished to tour Yanxia in the company of the fabled Warrior of Light. Together with Yugiri and Alisaie they paid a visit to Monzen, where the ambassador reaffirmed his determination to put an end to the conflict between Doma and the Empire, and lamented the loss of the majestic castle. The party then proceeded to Namai, and en route came upon a group of Red Kojin threatening two youths from the village. After driving away the thick-shelled sellswords, Asahi laid the blame for the Kojin's aggression squarely at the feet of the Empire, leading Yugiri to point out the absurdity of his position. Rather than take offense, however, he implored her to look past old allegiances that all might work towards the common goal of peace.

While not under the best of circumstances, Asahi seemed glad to have had the opportunity to share his thoughts on how relations between Doma and the Empire might be improved. And, regrettable though the battle was, he admitted to having relished the chance to witness the Warrior of Light's martial prowess firsthand.

True Intentions Laid Bare

Lord Hien agreed to the proposed exchange of prisoners on one condition: that Yotsuyu be granted exemption from the transaction should her memory fail to return by the appointed hour. Though plainly displeased by this stipulation, Asahi eventually consented, but not without making one final request: a moment to speak with his beloved sister in private. Hien duly granted his wish, and Asahi was admitted to Yotsuyu's quarters. When he emerged a short time later, he conceded that Yotsuyu's condition was not feigned, and entrusted her to Hien's care.

Having agreed upon the finer details of the exchange, there was naught left to do but bid the ambassador and his associates farewell, and so the Warrior of Light dutifully escorted them back to their ship along the bank of the One River. Moments prior to departing, however, Asahi pulled the Warrior of Light aside to offer special thanks—or so he claimed. With his back turned to the others, his smile quickly changed to a scowl, and he issued an ominous threat. Yet even as he began to speak, the Warrior of Light was overcome by a vision of the past, wherein he discovered Asahi was in fact a fervent admirer of the late Lord Zenos. Realizing the hero had walked in his memories only served to stoke the flames in the ambassador's eyes, and he castigated him for presuming to oppose his master before stalking away, leaving the Warrior of Light to watch openmouthed as the airship disappeared into the distance, dumbfounded by the sudden show of petulance.

Noting his troubled expression, Hien asked if something was amiss, and the Warrior of Light distractedly recounted his exchange with Asahi. The tale left Yugiri and Alisaie understandably aghast, but Hien appeared unmoved. Though he conceded the incident did not bode well for the coming prisoner exchange, he remained determined to see it through.

Despite the Scions' and the Doman's best efforts, the questions raised by Yotsuyu's return had yet to be satisfactorily answered, and the appearance of her adoptive brother only added to the uncertainty. Yet the light of hope could not be suffered to dim. Regardless of Asahi's aims, Doma and her allies would do whatever necessary to ensure that she never again fell under the shadow of imperial rule.

UNDER THE MOONLIGHT

The arrival of imperial envoys in the land of Doma was as unexpected as their stated purpose: to negotiate peace. Lord Hien, eager to secure the release of his conscripted countrymen, cautiously accepted the agreement, and arranged for a prisoner exchange. Yet even as Doma was poised to welcome the breaking dawn, the shadow of the fallen Zenos enfolded all in darkness and uncertainty.

Gosetsu and Tsuyu

It was no secret that Gosetsu had returned from his ordeal rather the worse for wear. Despite his best efforts to conceal his condition, one day he collapsed in full view of others. Upon visiting the bedridden samurai, however, the Warrior of Light and his companions were relieved to find him well on the path to recovery. Yotsuyu, meanwhile, seemed much the same as when they had last seen her—a child in a woman's body—and after spying on her from the shadows for a time, even Yugiri was forced to concede that Yotsuyu's plight was genuine. Convinced, Hien decided that she would be allowed to live out her days in Doma as "Tsuyu."

To this end, Hien needed to present Yotsuyu to the ambassador one last time to prove that her memory was truly gone. However, before they could do so, Yotsuyu somehow managed to leave the safety of the Kienkan and cross the river. At first, there were fears that her memory had returned and that she had fled, but in truth, she had traveled to Namai in search of the persimmons Gosetsu had enjoyed in his youth.

Alas, when she approached the people there, they recoiled in horror, for they recognized the former viceroy at once and thought her a vengeful spirit come to seek her revenge. When Hien and the others arrived to retrieve her, the villagers begged him to strike her down, to rid them of this canker, but he would not, and declared to one and all that until such time as her memories returned, she would be known as "Tsuyu," and treated as a citizen of Doma.

That time was fast approaching, though, for upon hearing the villager's accusations, Yotsuyu had fallen to her knees and begged for forgiveness, as if she knew within her heart that every word of it was true. She showed similar signs of recollection when she was later brought before Asahi, who had arranged a surprise reunion between his sister and the adoptive parents who had heaped emotional and physical abuse upon her since childhood. In spite of this, the ambassador did not object when she begged leave to return to the enclave, clutching the persimmon she sought to deliver to Gosetsu.

A Fate Embraced

When she returned to the Kienkan, eyes red from weeping, Yotsuyu spoke not a word, and simply sat and peeled the fruit she had brought for the grizzled samurai. However, when a maidservant looked in on her later, she found that the former viceroy had vanished without a trace. Hien cursed his naivety—doubtless it would have been a simple matter for one trained as an imperial spy to escape an unguarded room.

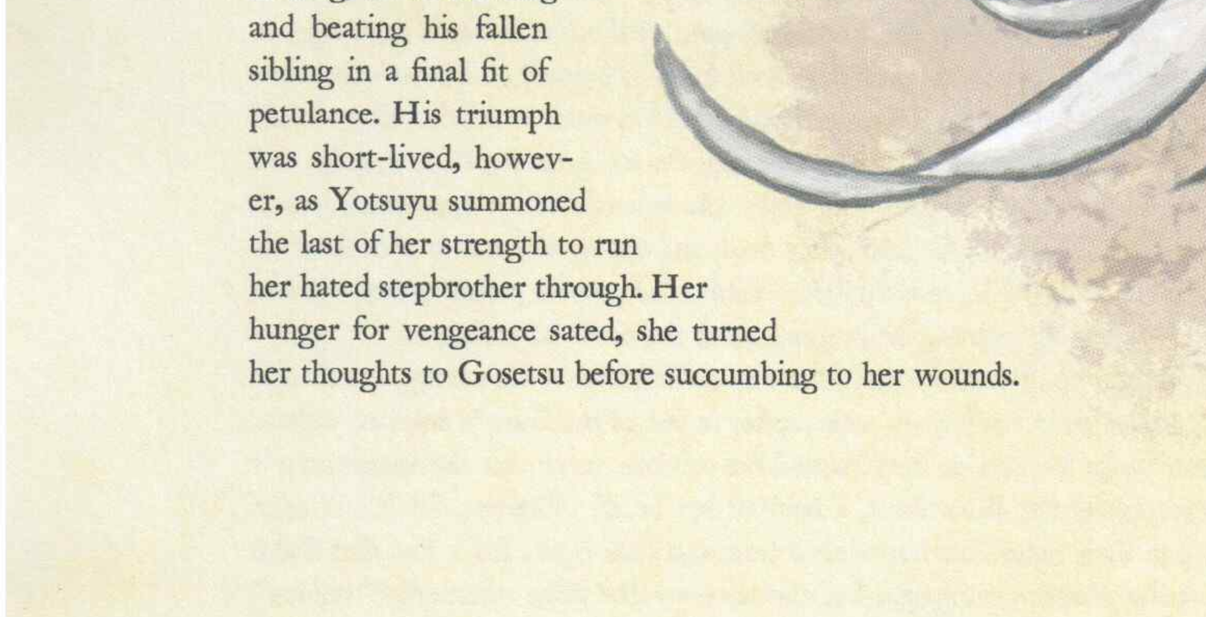
During a cursory search of the enclave, the Warrior of Light came upon Yotsuyu's parents—her mother, dead; her father, dying. Through the power of the Echo, he saw that the former viceroy, having recovered her memories, had slipped away to end her own life. However, when confronted once more by her two tormentors, who remained utterly unrepentant to the last, she burst into laughter and resigned herself to a different fate. She turned the dagger she had intended for herself on her parents, and as she stood over their bodies, Asahi stepped from the shadows...and applauded. Promising her the power to seize a deeper vengeance, he led her away, leaving his own flesh and blood lying in the dirt.

In Darkness Blooms the Spider Lily

Despite this turn of events, Hien was determined to bring the Doman conscripts home, come what may. At Castrum Fluminis, he and his retinue met with the Populares delegation, and as Hien and Asahi set about trading pleasantries, it seemed for a moment that the exchange would proceed without incident...until Yotsuyu made her appearance. Declaring her intent to rule over Doma once more, she held aloft a Kojin relic, and began to draw upon crystals hidden within the surrounding supply crates, transforming at last into the primal Tsukuyomi. With no hope of besting such a foe, Hien ruefully turned his attention to evacuating the Doman conscripts, leaving the Warrior of Light and his Echo-blessed comrades to face Yotsuyu's vengeful avatar alone.

But for all her defiant proclamations and righteous anger, a sliver of doubt remained. Unable to marshal her full strength at first, Yotsuyu called upon the specters of those who had made her suffer. They of Doma and the Empire—her parents, her brother, and even Zenos yae Galvus. Yet one came unbidden to join this multitude: Gosetsu, whose manifestation fought instead to protect her, to urge her to turn away from the brink. But it was not meant to be.

In the end, as Yotsuyu lay before the Warrior of Light, humbled and bereft of her celestial majesty, Asahi appeared and shot her in cold blood, seemingly bent on finishing what the hero had begun. Delighting in his victory, he mocked the Warrior of Light's futile efforts to salvage the peace treaty that had been invalidated by Yotsuyu's act of summoning, before berating and beating his fallen sibling in a final fit of petulance. His triumph was short-lived, however, as Yotsuyu summoned the last of her strength to run her hated stepbrother through. Her hunger for vengeance sated, she turned her thoughts to Gosetsu before succumbing to her wounds.



Emissary of the Dawn

While Asahi lay dying, the Warrior of Light witnessed a vision of an encounter with Zenos, who by all rights, should have been dead and buried at the time. The ambassador had been dispatched to undermine the Populares by orchestrating a summoning and in so doing remind the Garlean people of the threat primals pose. Yet even as the Warrior of Light pondered how to break the news of this troubling development, Maxima, the late Asahi's second-in-command, hailed Lord Hien from afar. To their relief, he had come to trade words and not blows, and as acting ambassador declared his intention to honor the original agreement between Doma and the Empire—for unlike Asahi, he was a true supporter of the Populares. Regrettably, he then confirmed their worst fears: Zenos was alive.

Suspecting Ascian involvement, Alphinaud offered to accompany Maxima back to Garlemald—much to his sister's dismay. The Scion insisted that it would be the most effective means by which they could advance their agenda, and so Lord Hien designated him an ambassador of Doma that he might be afforded a measure of diplomatic protection in his travels. Thus did the Warrior of Light and the others bid farewell to the Garlean delegation, their relief at salvaging a chance for peace tempered by a sense of deep foreboding...

GARLEMALD AND THE FAR EAST

Nearly fifty years ago, the Garlean Empire first entered into Othard in the name of conquest, setting in motion a series of events that would—with the fall of Dalmasca in the year 1547—forever reshape not only the Far East, but the entire world. In order to understand these lasting repercussions, one must first look to the humble origins of the northern nation.

Ilsabard's Fledgling Empire

In 922 of the Sixth Astral Era, over six hundred years ago, the various Garlean tribes of Ilsabard came together, and the Garlean Republic was born. Though unified, their strength still paled in comparison to that of their neighbors, until centuries later, in 1513, when the advent of magitek revolutionized the Garlean military's capabilities and tactics, and empowered them to subjugate their neighbors as they gradually became the most powerful nation in the region.

Four years later, in 1517, the newly appointed dictator Solus Galvus deployed Garlean airships in battle for the first time, and with them easily conquered and annexed the kingdom of Nhalmasque. Subsequent invasions of other nations would prove no more difficult, and by 1522 the whole of Ilsabard was under Garlean rule. In that same year, bolstered by a wave of unprecedented popular support, Solus proclaimed himself the first emperor of Garlemald, setting the stage for the first Far Eastern campaign, which would begin six years later.

A depiction of one of the earliest airships deployed in the Ilsabardian campaign. Compared to advanced assault craft, its cruising speed and payload capacity are vastly inferior. Nevertheless, it was more than capable of circumventing traditional fortifications and delivering imperial troops into the heart of enemy strongholds—a tactic that forever altered the course of modern warfare.

One of the warmachina featured heavily in the first campaign. The intricate mechanisms were inadequately shielded from the elements and prone to failure when deployed in desert environs, as the Garleans learned to their peril. Their poor service record, together with the other difficulties the legions struggled with in the Burn, led the Empire to conclude that an overland route through the region was impossible.

The First Far Eastern Campaign

"No lands must remain beyond our grasp. Go forth. Conquer. Rule." Thus spoke Solus zos Galvus to his officers and their men during a massive military parade celebrating the commencement of the Far Eastern campaign, in which three imperial legions under the emperor's command would venture forth in a grand endeavor—albeit one that would ultimately end in failure. Garlemald first set its sights on Nagxia, and in order to reach it they would need traverse the vast desert known as the Burn. The distance to be covered was too great for their airships, and so the emperor instead bade them utilize multi-legged magitek transports. However, these warmachina were ill suited to this harsh clime, and the sand which found its way into every nook and cranny was a source of constant consternation and frequent mechanical breakdowns. The near complete absence of potable water sources further compounded their woes, and in the face of flagging morale, the emperor gave the order to withdraw.

The lasting legacy of this aborted campaign would be born not from any skirmish with the enemy, but from a brief detour taken by the legions when the emperor bade them seek shelter in one of the Burn's desolate valleys, where they found an ancient ruin. Upon closer inspection, they learned the terrible truth: that the ancient city's inhabitants were responsible for the creation of the Burn itself, a land all but bereft of aether, for it had been consumed by godlike beings the people in their hubris had summoned time and time again. So it was that Solus zos Galvus not only suspended the first Far Eastern campaign, but also decreed that these summoned "eikons" were a blight upon this star that must be destroyed without exception.

The Subjugation of Dalmasca

Solus would brook no delay on his return, channeling the vast resources of the Garlean Empire into the development of new magitek designs. During this insular period in which they reigned in their expansionist ambitions, the imperials created faster, more efficient airship designs, as well as smaller units which could be operated by even a single pilot. Finally, in 1547 of the Sixth Astral Era—or the 26th year of the new Garlean calendar—an imperial army reborn was ready to go to war. This time, however, they would not head east through the Burn towards Nagxia, but instead veer south towards the Skatay Range and leverage their new mobility to claim a far greater prize: the Kingdom of Dalmasca.

Owing to its location, Dalmasca was then a hub of international trade. Naturally, many nations had recognized and coveted their prosperous position, and had sought to claim their lands through military action, but to their credit, the royal line of B'nargin had managed to defend the kingdom for more than a thousand years. The extensive defensive fortifications along their borders and in major cities had served them so well that Solus had originally believed invasion to be a losing proposition.

However, the Empire's new airships had changed the equation, allowing their legions to sail effortlessly over the northern mountain range that had long served as a natural deterrent. The Dalmascans could only look on in despair as their defenses were easily circumvented and major cities seized in the blink of an eye. When the dust had settled, Nalbina Fortress, under the command of Prince Rasler, stood alone as the last bastion of resistance against the invaders, having barely erected a magical barrier in time to forestall an aerial assault.

For half a year Noah van Gabranth and his IVth Legion laid siege to the fortress. More than seventy thousand souls are said to have perished by the time it fell, and with it the fabled Desert Sapphire of Rabanastre, signifying the complete and utter defeat of Dalmascan forces at the hands of the Empire.

From Nagxia to Yanxia

Following their victory, the Empire divided the conquered Kingdom of Dalmasca into two regions. The desert south of the Skatay Range was dubbed Dalmasca Superior, with Rabanastre to serve as the seat of the provincial government, whereas the Golmore Jungle and Greylic's Bend were named Dalmasca Inferior, with Lea Monde as its capital. Together, they would comprise the Diocese of Dalmasca, the Garlean Empire's foothold in the Far East.

Rabanastre became a key staging ground for imperial forces in the campaign, and from there the Empire advanced into Nagxia. Although the realm was divided amongst several clans that were unable to muster a united resistance, imperial forces were at a disadvantage, as the local resistance took advantage of the dense jungle climes to frustrate the invaders' movements and stage ambushes. It took nearly three whole years for Garlemald to subjugate the whole of Nagxia, ultimately by relying upon small, highly trained mobile units scouring the jungles until the last belligerents were brought to heel, allowing the Empire in 1552 of the Sixth Astral Era to devote its attention wholly to the conquest of Yanxia and the Kingdom of Doma.

The Fall of Doma

Lord Kaien of the Rijin, sovereign of Doma, saw that an invasion was imminent, and so he dispatched emissaries to Hingashi to request aid in the coming war. Alas, after seeing what had become of Dalmasca, the bakufu was determined to remain neutral. All overtures made by Doma were summarily rejected, for Hingashi would not entertain any discussion. Although a response of this nature had been anticipated, the exceedingly cold and calculating treatment angered Kaien's retainers. Yet the king is said to have taken it in stride, declaring with a grin that Doma would seize this opportunity to show they who had first conceived the samurai tradition what "warriors brave and true" could achieve.

When Garlemald came to Yanxia, they once more turned to proven strategy and relied upon the supremacy of their airships to achieve a swift and decisive victory. Rather than reinforcing their castles and strongholds, however, Kaien concentrated his forces along the Dairyu Moon Gates, and from their towering walls the Domans utilized a combination of geomancy and ninjutsu to disrupt the aetherial currents and send imperial airships crashing to the earth. Those who attempted to secure a foothold by land were met with fierce resistance from a people united, as well as—if the tales are to be believed—guardian spirits known as auspices, including one known as Tamamo Gozen.

Yet even this most spirited defense could not hope to prevail against the full might of Garlemald. Despite repelling the first wave, the Empire simply redoubled its efforts. More and more airships were dispatched to Yanxia, some even towing floating islands from Dalmasca which had been repurposed as aerial fortresses. Castrum Fluminis was built overnight in an attempt to secure a foothold in the region, and from there the imperials mounted a renewed assault by land and air to force Doma into submission. Lord Kaien soon judged that further resistance would be in vain, and to avoid needless bloodshed, he bent the knee to Garlemald.

Unrest in the Far Eastern Provinces

The great and powerful nations of the Far East were no match for the Empire's military might. Nevertheless, the peoples of these new provinces were by no means content to acquiesce to foreign rule. For nearly three decades the imperial forces in Dalmasca struggled to contain an endless string of violent uprisings, culminating in the infamous Barheim Incident which claimed the lives of countless soldiers. Unable to reassert control on their own, the resident IVth Legion had to turn to Gaius van Baelsar's XIVth for assistance. It was in the ensuing strife and bloodshed that Livia sas Junius earned her notorious reputation by hunting down suspected rebels like rats and slaughtering them without trial.

Compared to the Dalmascans, the Doman people were rather more amenable—albeit on the surface. In truth, the Doman Liberation Front, aided by the deposed Kaien Rijin, spent years biding their time for the perfect moment to strike. When he led his people in rebellion, united, they succeeded in driving the imperials from Yanxia. Yet this victory would prove fleeting, for when Zenos yae Galvus, crown prince of Garlemald, swept into Yanxia with the XIIth Legion and called upon the imperial agents hidden amongst the shinobi to betray their brothers and sisters, all hope for freedom was lost. That no other province dare take inspiration from the Domans, the imperials imposed a series of brutal punishments upon the populace, the scars of which linger still.

THE OMEGA RECORDS

As the war for Ala Mhigo's liberation raged on, in its shadow another furious struggle was set in motion, unbeknownst to all save a few. Owing to the records generously provided by Jessie Jaye of Garlond Ironworks, the world may appreciate the full extent of the threat posed by the ancient weapon Omega—and the valorous deeds of the heroes who rose against it.

Awakening a Relic

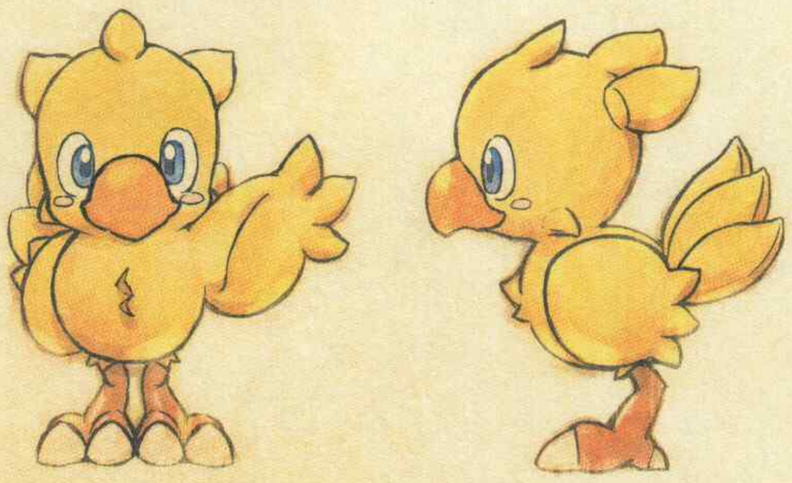
By the twisted machination of Ilberd Feare, a dread primal had manifested in the skies above Baelsar's Wall. While its identity was at first unknown, one thing was certain: ere long it would break free of its confinement and unleash its fury upon the realm. Confronted with the possibility of another Calamity, the leaders of the Eorzean Alliance resorted to desperate action: activating Omega, an ancient primal countermeasure buried deep beneath the Carteneau Flats.

After eons in slumber, Omega roused to life and identified the primal as a target. Yet even as the mechanical monstrosity moved to attack, the creature burst forth from its prison to reveal its terrible form—a draconic being that would come to be known as Shinryu. The two mighty entities engaged in a furious aerial battle, which ended when both crashed down in Gyr Abania amidst a blinding explosion and disappeared. As overseers of Omega's activation, Cid Garlond and his eponymous Ironworks were tasked with locating the missing weapon, their mission taking them to a place that transcended all imagining.

The Search for Omega

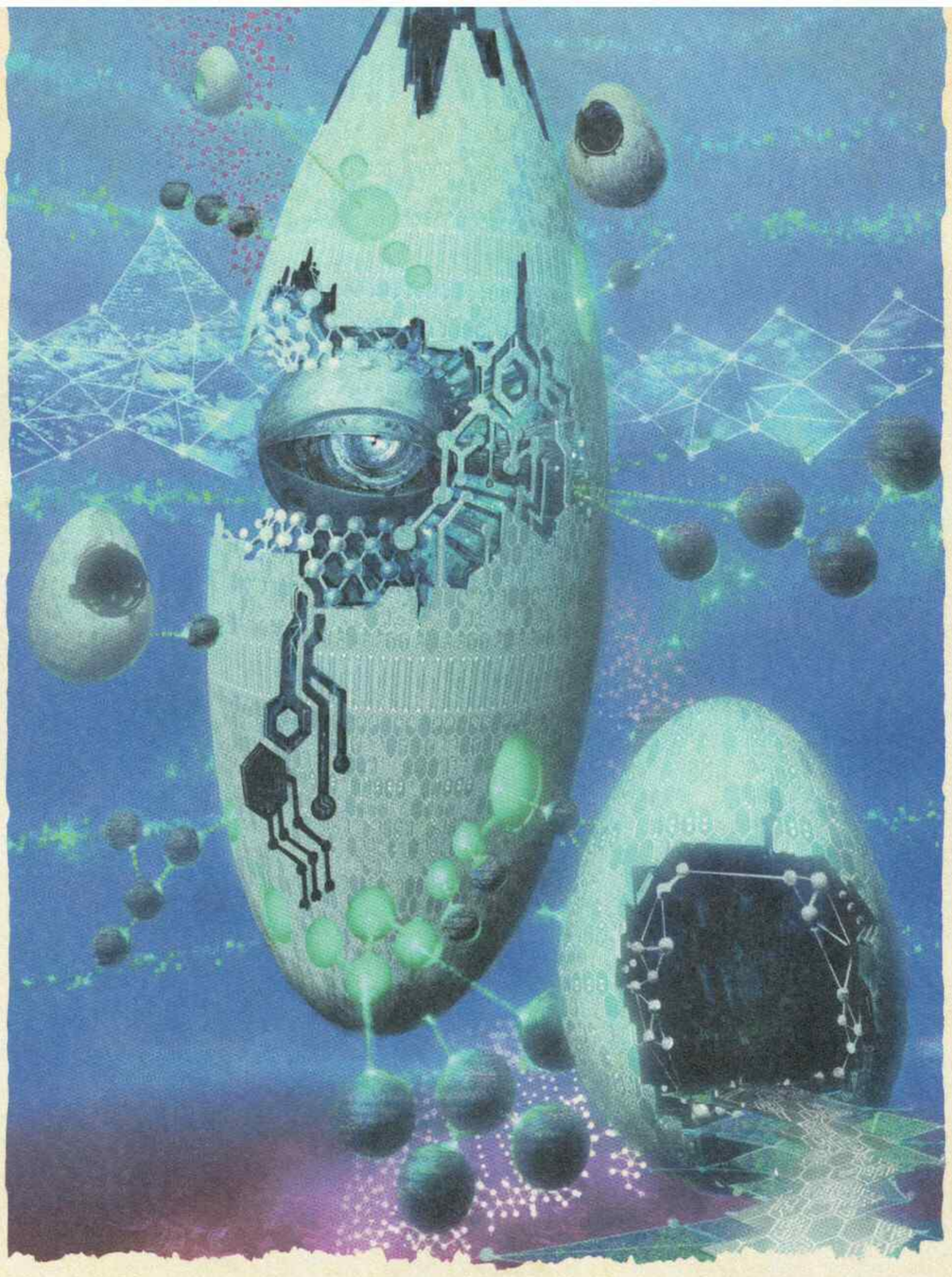
Despite the Ironworks' best efforts, Omega proved exceedingly elusive. While Shinryu fell into the Empire's hands and was subsequently vanquished by the Warrior of Light and his comrades, there was not so much as a trace of the Allagan relic to be found. But amidst the standstill, there suddenly came a lead. Aetheric readings were observed to have risen alarmingly at the Yawn, the massive crater in the Fringes where Omega and Shinryu were believed to have fallen. So it was that Cid Garlond and his assistants set out for said crater, the Warrior of Light in tow.

As the party inspected the pool of condensed aether that filled the Yawn, without warning, a peculiar chocobo-like being burst forth. Its name later revealed to be Alpha, the creature led the companions through the Yawn and into Omega's domain—the Interdimensional Rift.



Appearing to be a mammet designed in the likeness of a chocobo, the mysterious Alpha proved to be the key to victory. Communicating via expressive kwehs, it served as a dependable guide to the heroes throughout their arduous journey.

Midgardsormr claims a long and troubled history with Omega. Through his diminutive incarnation which journeys with the Warrior of Light, the Father of Dragons provided the heroes with invaluable insight and advice in the course of their trials.



The Deltascape

Setting foot in the Interdimensional Rift, the heroes found themselves in the midst of an experiment in progress. An autonomous weapon, Omega was designed with the ability to evolve, to which end it had created within its domain test worlds known as scapes. Each scape was populated with an array of test subjects—entities selected and recreated from both fact and fiction—that were to be pitted against each other in order to determine a worthy opponent for Omega itself to face. Speaking through one of its monitors, Omega revealed that Alpha was also a test subject before abruptly demanding the party's participation in the experiment.

Though the heroes naturally harbored misgivings towards the demand, they had no choice but to comply. For not only did Omega rule supreme within its domain; left untended, its creations would eventually overrun the corporeal realm and become a serious threat. Thus did the Warrior of Light and his comrades resolve to weather the coming trials, sallying forth into the first test world, the Deltascape, to contend with its four formidable residents.

Subject Delta IV was a recreation of Exdeath, a being from an ancient Ilsabardian tale said to command the power of the void.

The Sigmascape

Against the odds, the Warrior of Light and his comrades emerged triumphant from the Deltascape—a result that Omega had deemed unexpected, and yet desired. For by their victories, they presented an anomaly the weapon sought to understand: heroes. History shows numerous instances of otherwise unremarkable individuals who have defeated vastly superior beings, and by studying this phenomenon, it aimed to acquire valuable data for its evolution.

The outcome also supported Omega's observation that certain beings may unleash hidden potential when subjected to stress, and to put this hypothesis to the proof, it attacked and grievously wounded two members of the party, Biggs and Wedge. At this point, it became clear that Omega would stop at nothing—would even instigate a massacre with utter indifference—in order to advance its experiment. Keenly aware of the heightened stakes, the heroes ventured into the next test world, the Sigmascape.

Alas, though they secured victory once more, Omega's fiendish tests exacted a heavy toll. Nero too would be wounded in yet another of its ploys, and the others were forced to continue shorn of his analyses and contrivances. And to compound matters, Midgardsormr would spend his strength protecting the Warrior of Light and subsequently fade into a slumber. The true struggle was only just beginning.

Depicted is the graven image controlled by Subject Sigma IV, a jester and mage named Kefka. According to Nero's information, Kefka rose to godhood and ruled over a world he had plunged into ruin.

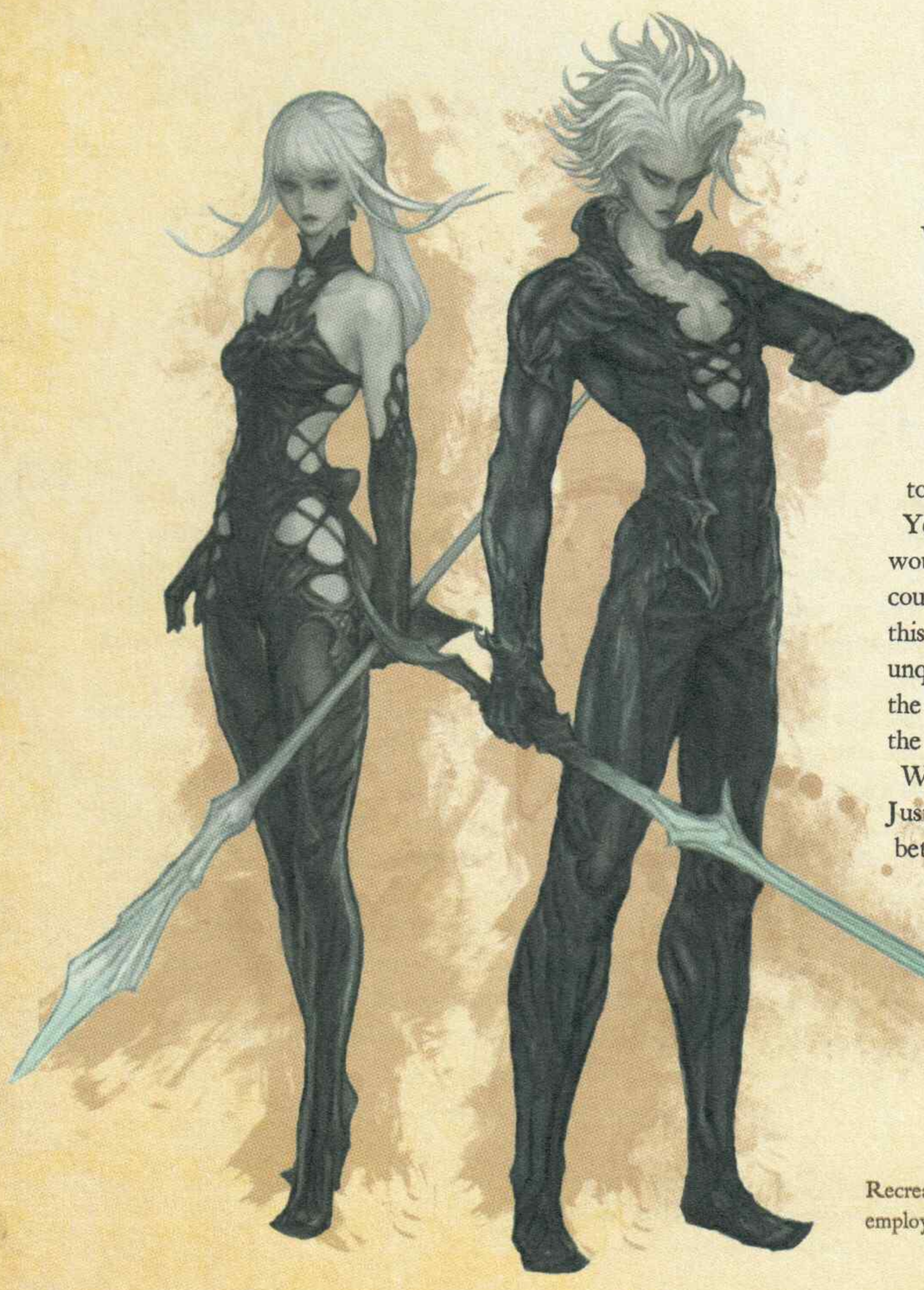
At Experiment's End

During the brief respite between trials, Cid Garlond surreptitiously obtained research data from his native Garlemald. It pertained to the ill-fated experiment at the Bozja Citadel helmed by his late sire, Midas nan Garlond, which saw an entire city obliterated in the blinking of an eye. Drawing upon this data, heavy with the bitter memories of his disillusionment with the Empire, Cid set about devising a countermeasure against Omega.

Meanwhile, the experiment entered its final phase. The next opponent was designated as a being in the Psi group known as Chaos, who had similarly vanquished all opposition thus far. Against this ancient evil straddling myth and reality, said to have fallen to the very first heroes, the Warrior of Light and his comrades were sorely tested, but as before they defied the odds and claimed yet another impossible victory.

Unable to reconcile the mortals' feats with their frailness, Omega sought verification by forcing upon them an additional trial. For their opponent, it recreated the sole being that it could not defeat—Midgardsormr. But the heroes achieved that which had eluded the ancient weapon, and thus were they finally recognized as worthy foes for its evolution.

Among Omega's eighty-nine creations, the Psi group emerged as the strongest, and its fourth subject, Chaos, defeated the other beings in the group to remain the last standing.



The Battle with Omega

With the battle against Omega looming, Cid entrusted the Warrior of Light with his completed countermeasure. Capable of unleashing a powerful lightning bolt, the sole attack among Shinryu's arsenal that pierced Omega's defenses, the magitek device could be employed to enfeeble their mechanical foe. Thus armed, the Warrior of Light and his comrades engaged Omega, and at the end of a furious struggle they succeeded in striking down the weapon. In the end, it was by the aid of their allies that they rose above their opponent to secure a narrow yet decisive victory.

Yet that victory was short-lived. After pursuing evolution over eons, Omega would not succumb so easily, and empowered by a wealth of data acquired through countless tests, it recreated itself in the image of that which humbled it: man. In this form, the weapon boasted transcendent combat capabilities, but lacking that unquenchable, yet undefinable mortal quality known as the "spirit,"—or perhaps the "heart"—it fell short of fully imitating man. Thus did it fall once more and for the last time to the champions of Eorzea.

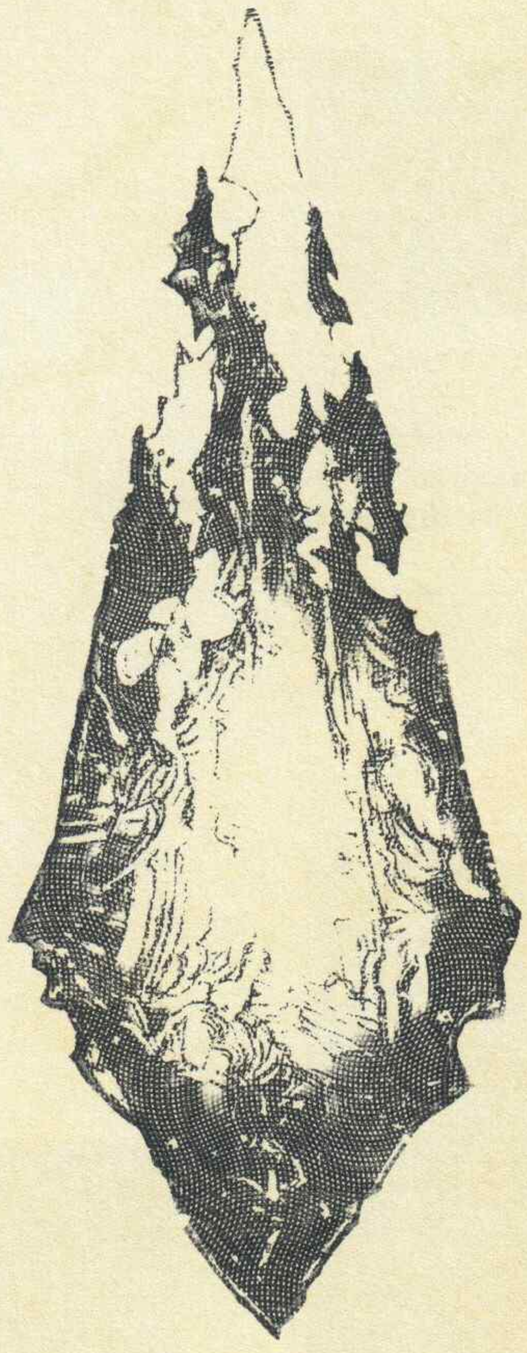
Without its creator to sustain it, the Interdimensional Rift began to collapse. Just when it seemed that the heroes would forever be consigned to drift the space between dimensions, a winged savior did appear: the great wyrm Hraesvelgr. Summoned by his sire, Midgardsormr, the wyrm bore the party back to the corporeal realm. So it was that Warrior of Light and his comrades made their triumphant return, having against all odds delivered the world from a dire threat.

Recreating itself in the image of man, Omega set upon the heroes once more, employing its male and female forms with deadly effect.

Encyclopædia Eorzea II

BOOK III

HER LANDS



THE REPUBLIC OF ALA MHIGO

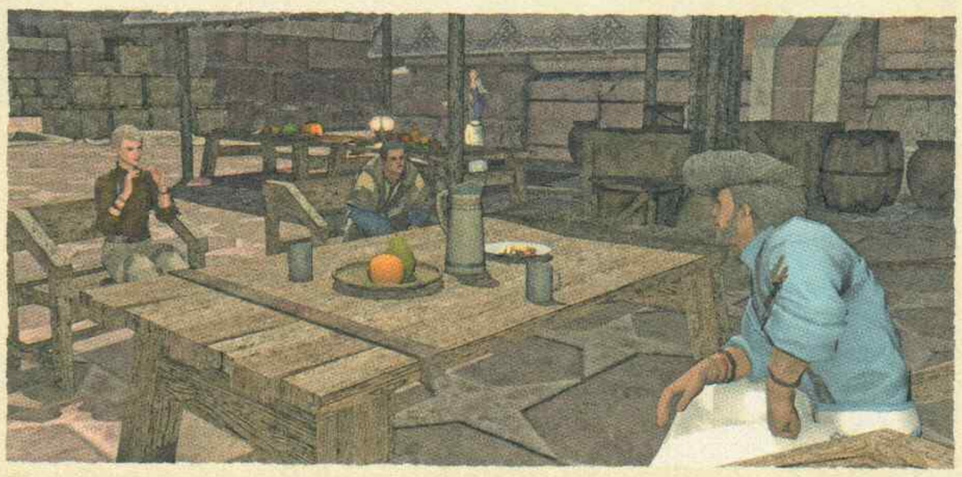
At the culmination of a bloody war, the city-state of Ala Mhigo at last won its freedom from two decades of stifling imperial rule. The nation has entered the ranks of the Eorzean Alliance, and now joins those who aided its liberation in writing this new chapter in history.

Overview

Flag	The Ala Mhigan flag is a field of purple upon which stands a silver griffin with sword in talons. The winged creature is the sigil of the nation's royal house, and the blade signifies the force used to see all other clans bend the knee before them. Purple is the color of Rhalgr, the guardian deity of the nation, and is associated with His element of lightning. The hue's presence on the pennant also marks the bond betwixt the royalty and the religious order of the Fist of Rhalgr.
Motto	Liberty or Death
Government	Upon casting off the Empire's yoke, Ala Mhigo instituted an interim government built upon the Resistance's command structure. Envoys of myriad races—leaders and elders from across Gyr Abania—were then called to a summit to decide the nation's fate. After much debate, the assembled representatives chose to emulate the structure of Ishgard's new republic, and entrust the city-state's rule to an elected council.

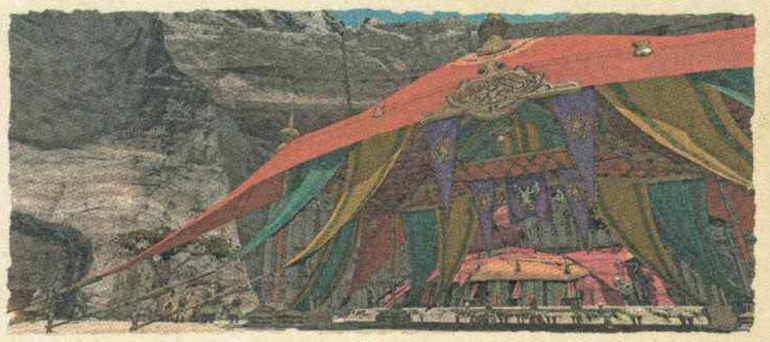
Leader	—
Ruling Body	Ala Mhigo is governed by a council of representatives, its members elected to speak on behalf of Gyr Abania's diverse settlements and tribes.
Racial Distribution	Highlander Hyur: 60% Hellsguard Roegadyn: 10% Midlander Hyur: 10% Seeker of the Sun Miqo'te: 10% Other: 10%
Religion	Under the sovereign rule of King Theodoric, and later the dominion of the Garlean Empire, worshipers of Rhalgr were oppressed and punished for their beliefs. Since Ala Mhigo's liberation, however, the people are free once more to practice their faith, and this resurgence has been accompanied by the appearance of a young monk who seeks to restore the Fist of Rhalgr. The Fist's stance on orthodox doctrine has earned it the support of the citizenry, and the order's number of adherents continues to grow daily.

Industries	Mercenary Work: Large numbers of Ala Mhigan refugees found themselves funneled into the mercenary trade, and even now, little has changed for the majority. Although some few have embarked on the long road back to Gyr Abania, many in the hire of organizations such as the Brass Blades or Stone Torches are reluctant to abandon the stable work and steady coin. Until the restoration of their homeland is complete and its economy repaired, Ala Mhigo's wayward sons and daughters will continue to live as sellswords. Farming: In some of the poorer villages, there has been a recent surge of interest in agriculture. Inhabitants have begun planting dates and other crops which can thrive even in the dry and dusty soil. Goldsmithing: Under the auspices of Sultana Nanamo Ul Namo, a school for training aspiring goldsmiths was opened in Rhalgr's Reach. The school has enlisted the aid of the Ananta and their sorcerous command over metal, and the initiative is gaining interest as a promising new industry for Ala Mhigo. Salt Manufacture: The challenging business of refining salt from the waters of Loch Seld has been a key industry in Ala Mhigo since before the Empire's invasion. With contributions from Ul'dah's royal treasury and the mercantile connections of the East Aldenard Trading Company supporting the effort, the expansion of operations in the Saltery and subsequent distribution of its products are progressing at a phenomenal pace.
Beliefs	As a result of fighting alongside the Vira during the war for liberation and benefitting from the continued assistance of the Eorzean Alliance, Ala Mhigo's population is quickly adjusting to the presence of different clans and races. People are put in mind of the disparate groups of refugees who banded together in the mountains of Gyr Abania to survive the flooding of the Sixth Umbral Calamity, and the parallels between the situations have become a source of hope and camaraderie.
Diet	A wide range of foodstuffs were shipped in from Ilsabard during the decades when Ala Mhigo was yet a province of the Empire, but such imports were destined only for the dining halls of affluent imperial officers. As such, the diet of the common folk has remained largely unchanged. Ala Mhigan cuisine may have become even less diverse due to the cessation of trade with the east and a subsequent shortage in spices.



Organizations

Ala Mhigan Resistance



This organization was formed for the purpose of liberating the city-state of Ala Mhigo from its subjugation at the hands of the Garlean Empire. The core of the Resistance included revolutionaries who stood against the King of Ruin's tyranny, and is often considered to be a regrouping of the selfsame force which was splintered by the Empire's invasion. Rather than a single, cohesive faction, however, the Resistance more closely resembled a gathering of small-scale groups, each with their own ideas and priorities—a composition which served to protect the movement as a whole from imperial aggression. By acting as individual units, the loss of one cell would not prevent the rest of the organization from pursuing its objectives.

Raubahn Aldynn

"Now is the time that we, the people of Ala Mhigo, must decide what manner of nation we will build for ourselves, and for generations yet unborn."

Raubahn, a Highlander born in Coldhearth some forty-four winters ago, is known for his deadly weapon, Tizona, and a fondness for the odd bottle of arak. He has proven his tactical acumen time and again, both as the general of the Immortal Flames, and as the leader who coordinated Alliance and Ala Mhigan forces during the war for Ala Mhigo's liberation.

After realizing his lifelong ambition to free his homeland, Raubahn intended to return to Ul'dah, but it was Nanamo, the sultana to whom he had pledged fealty, along with the Warrior of Light, who encouraged his eventual decision to remain in Ala Mhigo. Welcomed with open arms, the former general was ushered into the role of interim head of state, and given command of the nation's army. His first deed was to proclaim the "Resistance" the official title of the military—an act which ensured that the struggles and sacrifices of his countrymen would never be forgotten.

Lyse Hext

"Twenty years the Empire had ruled us, but no longer. Liberty or death. Liberty or death."

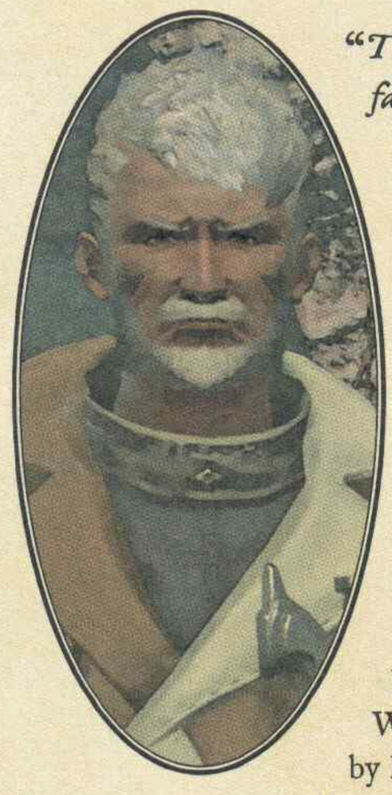
Hailing from the village of Ala Gannha, this Highlander woman lived under the identity of her older sister, Yda, for much of her five and twenty summers. When it came to liberating Ala Mhigo, however, she shed that name for her own, and eventually took to wearing her sibling's traditional garb as a means of honoring her memory. Alongside her Scion companions, Lyse battled the Empire's forces across the breadth of Gyr Abania, and it was in the aftermath of one such skirmish that Conrad, with his dying breath, bid her assume leadership of his freedom fighters. Yet even as she struggled to shoulder the burdens of her unexpected command, Lyse's actions in the war were pivotal in winning freedom for her homeland. Following Ala Mhigo's victory, Lyse would leave the Scions—withdrawing from the neutral organization to embrace her role as the commander of Resistance troops in the Fringes.

Curtis Hext

"Dying is easy, soldier. Living is harder."

A hero of the Ala Mhigan revolution, Curtis was once a guard in the employ of the royal household. Unable to endure King Theodoric's oppressive rule, however, he fled with his two beloved daughters—Yda and Lyse—to live off the land as a hunter. Yet the mad king's tyranny grew worse with each passing day, and Curtis, at the behest of his former comrades, was drawn into the ranks of a newly formed insurgent army. His natural charisma soon saw him rise to a position of leadership, and after many a hard-fought battle, he led the charge which would topple the crazed monarch from his throne. But the victory would be short-lived. The Empire seized the opportunity to launch an invasion in the chaotic wake of the revolution, and Curtis, then forty-one years of age, was killed in the ensuing violence—a tragic end for a man who wanted only a peaceful future for his children.

Conrad Kemp



"Though we've come a long way, we still have far to go. But we'll fight for every ilm, and sooner or later, we'll get to Ala Mhigo."

Conrad would become leader to a band of Resistance fighters in Rhalgr's Reach later in life, but his first vocation was as a practitioner of traditional Gyr Abanian medicine—a form of healing which incorporates elements of both thaumaturgy and apothecary. He avoided the battles waged during the reign of King Theodoric, but conflict found him when, under imperial rule, he was persecuted for his religious beliefs and dragged off to an internment camp. Witnessing firsthand the atrocities perpetrated by his tormentors, Conrad was convinced to join the Resistance movement and fight for the future of his beleaguered homeland. His decision estranged him from his wife, Grede, but although he sacrificed his marriage for love of his nation, this determined man of seventy winters would perish on the battlefield ere Ala Mhigo's freedom was finally won.

Rhalgr's Reach

A place sacred to worshipers of the Destroyer, the location known as Rhalgr's Reach sprawls around the base of the Temple of the Fist. The site was abandoned following its destruction at the King of Ruin's orders, but the Ala Mhigan Resistance has since established a new stronghold upon its ashes.

Chakra Falls

Bloodstorm

Rhalgr's Reach Aetheryte Plaza

A The Destroyer

Over the course of centuries, disciples of the Fist of Rhalgr worked away at the rocky cliff, carving it back to create this colossal image of the Destroyer. By virtue of its size, it is said to have stood defiant through the mad king's savage attack on the temple, and stands watch over Rhalgr's Reach to this day.

B Starfall

Rhalgr's star, the comet which guided people to safety from the rising floods, is said to have made its fiery landfall in this very spot. The sizeable crater thus formed became a lake, and monks would cleanse themselves in its pure waters before making the climb to worship at the temple above.

C Chakra Falls

"Chakra" is a word used to describe the valves which regulate the flow of the body's aether. The deluge of water which plunges incessantly into Starfall is so named for its resemblance to the coursing energy which cascades from the aura of a trained monk.

D Bloodstorm

Set at the feet of the Destroyer, this monument enshrines in stone the words of a high priest of the Fist of Rhalgr:

A storm of blood approaches fast,
Hells open, Heavens weep.
For no one soul doth lie beyond
The measure of His Reach.

E Rhalgr's Reach Aetheryte Plaza

Rhalgr's Reach once echoed with the commotion of a veritable host of monks and pilgrims. Taverns and inns provided for the faithful, and the multitude of visitors coming and going eventually prompted the construction of a permanent aetheryte.

F The Barber

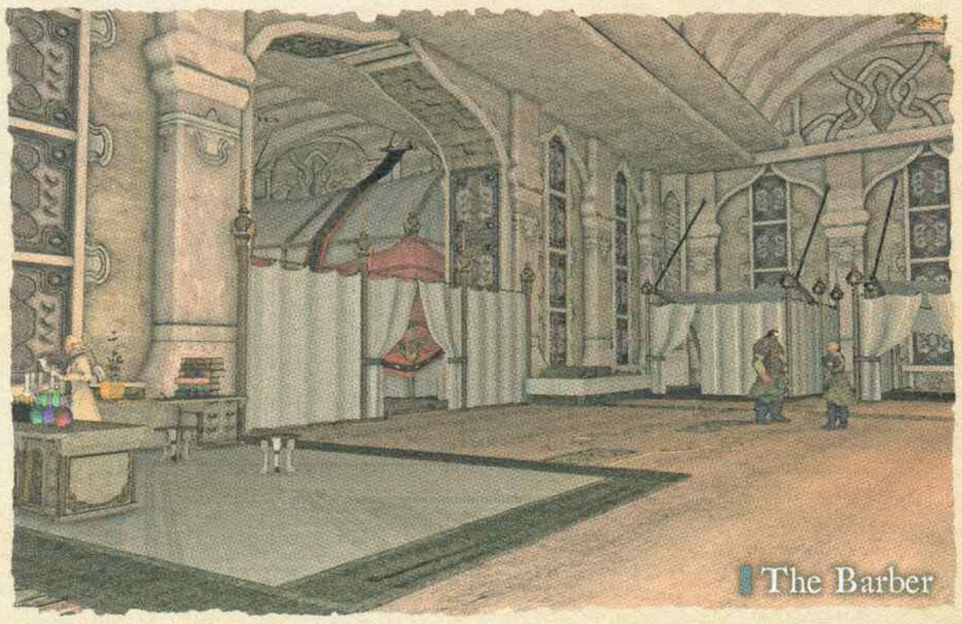
The Ala Mhigan Resistance set up this infirmary in an empty corner of Rhalgr's Reach to treat those injured in the war against the Empire. Despite the best of intentions, however, the facility operates on a constant shortage of sickbeds, medicines, and trained chirurgeons.

G Recompense

This tomb was excavated to inter the remains of fallen Resistance soldiers—namely those who paid the price of freedom with their own lives. It is known that Conrad Kemp, the former commander of Rhalgr's Reach, was laid to his final rest within the stone walls of Recompense.

H The Temple of the Fist

Once the main temple for the Fist of Rhalgr and the birthplace of the monkhood, this holy house of the Destroyer was a place where disciples came to temper their bodies and hone their martial skills. When the order became embroiled in political disputes, however, the Temple of the Fist was gutted with fire at King Theodoric's maddened command.



The Barber

The Temple of the Fist

The Fringes

Situated in the west of Gyr Abania and bisected by the Velodyna River, the Fringes is a stretch of land which shares a border with the nation of Gridania. During the Empire's occupation, this region saw the construction of Baelsar's Wall, and was considered a perimeter to be held against the encroachment of the beast tribes and their territories.

East End

A forested area on the Gyr Abania side of the border, East End is a continuation of the Black Shroud, and thus shares much of the latter's species of vegetation. Once a part of Gridania, trappers and botanists alike would often wander beneath its boughs. The place is better known to historians, however, as the bloody stage for the Autumn War.

Castrum Oriens

This Garlean stronghold had its beginnings as the construction base for Baelsar's Wall. Following the Seventh Umbral Calamity, it was expanded to become a fully fledged castrum for the Black Wolf's renewed invasion efforts. Now, it is held by the Order of the Twin Adder and jointly garrisoned by Alliance forces.

Bittermill

Formerly a Gridanian hamlet, Bittermill was so named for the resident apothecaries who would pluck the local herbs and grind them into powder for use in various potions and poultices. The Empire later converted the settlement into a prison camp, and its captives were rumored to be the subjects of vile experiments.

Owyn's Stash

In the time when East End still belonged to Gridania, this gloomy cave served as a storehouse for the illicitly brewed stock of an opportunist peddler. Faint fumes from Owyn's potent liquor are said to linger still in the far corners of the cavern.

The Percipient One

As old as the Guardian Tree found in the Central Shroud, this ancient giant dominates the surrounding forest. Long ago, it was said to have harbored a great elemental, but not the slightest trace of the spirit's presence remains. Over the two decades of the Empire's occupation, it would seem that the Percipient One's roots drank too deeply of some unsavory contaminant.

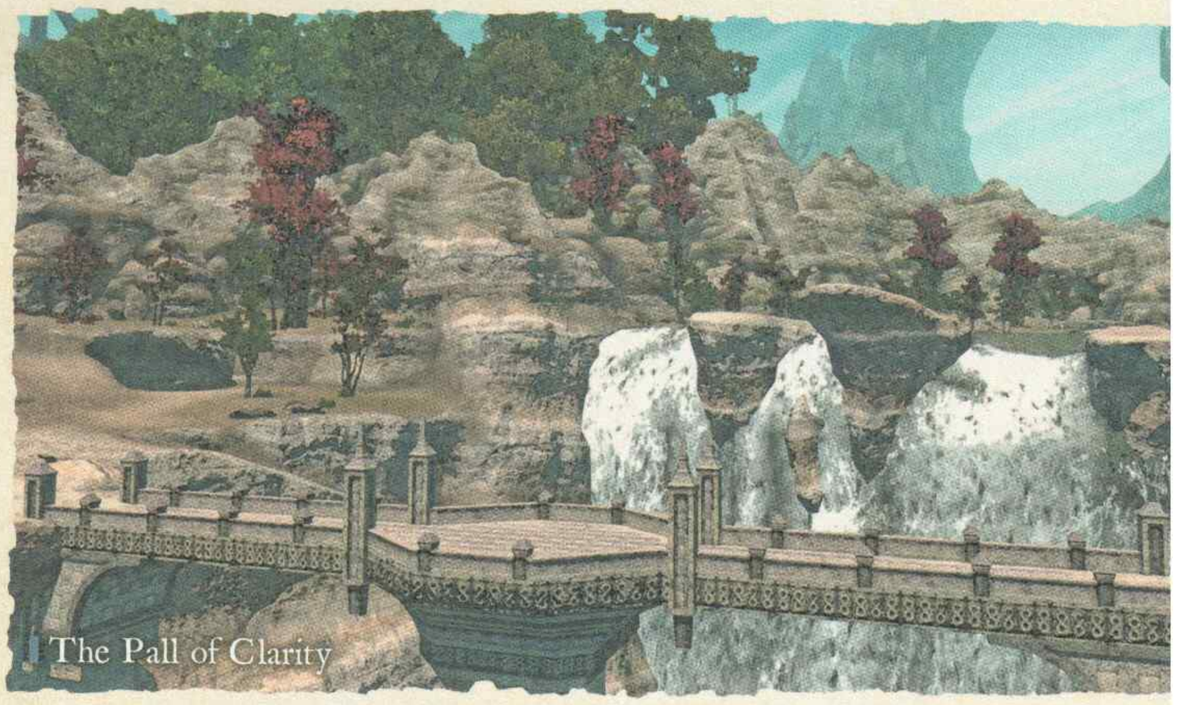
Dimwold

A gloomy forest occupying the southern expanse of East End. Drenched by the waters of Timmon Beck and numerous subterranean springs, the air beneath the boughs is laden with moisture, giving rise to a constant veil of light-smothering mist.

Fletcher's Cabin

Once a seasonal retreat for local hunters, the building was abandoned when the Empire conquered Ala Mhigo. This weathered cabin also provided an isolated sanctuary for Sanche and her daughter, Gatty, who was but an infant when the pair fled Gridania years ago.

Castrum Oriens


The Pall of Clarity

Pike Falls

Pike Falls refers to the majestic drops of the Velodyna River, as well as their immediate surrounds. Precipitously straight and narrow, the waterfalls are named for their resemblance to the pikes favored by foot soldiers of the old Ala Mhigan army.

Castellum Corvi

A waypoint on the road to Castrum Oriens, this structure—thought to be renamed during Nael van Darnus's temporary command of the XIVth Legion—mainly served as a guardhouse for imperial troops. Upon the defeat of the Empire's forces at Baelsar's Wall, the castellum was quickly abandoned by its occupants in anticipation of a committed Alliance advance.

The Comet's Tail

Fabled to have been formed by the passage of Rhalgr's guiding star in the time of the Sixth Umbral Calamity, this stony corridor is aglow with an ethereal incandescence. Though the legend is the more romantic interpretation, scholars have determined that the emission of light is caused by a unique mineral deposit buried within the rock.

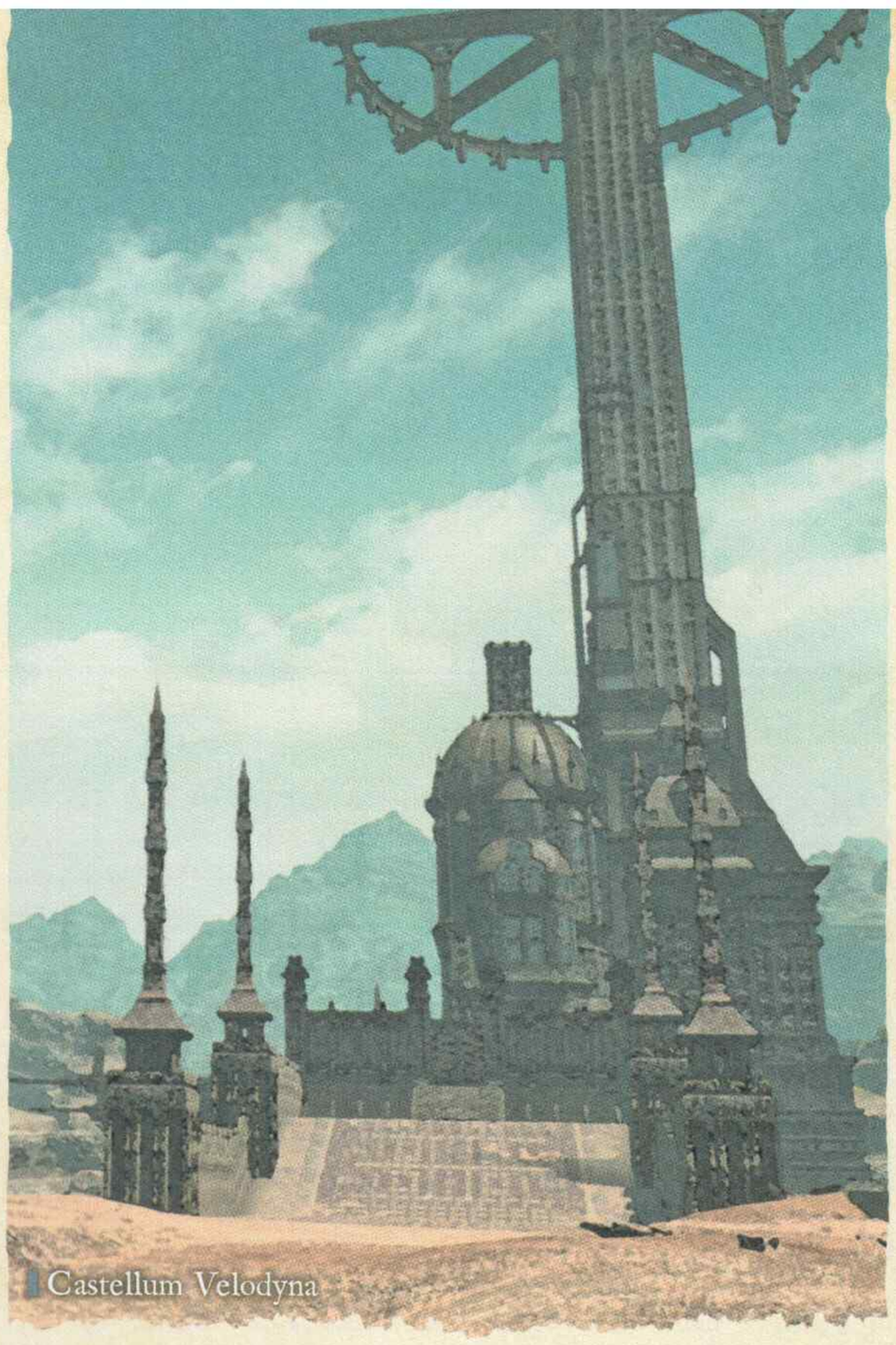
The Pall of Clarity

Standing upon this bridge which spans the Velodyna River, one can bathe in the spray of the nearby waterfall, and experience a cleansing of both body and spirit. It is said that the monks of the Fist of Rhalgr would visit this very spot to practice their meditation techniques.

The Velodyna River

One of Eorzea's mightiest rivers, the Velodyna rushes forth from its source in Abalathia's Spine. Its waters teem with life, but as the natural border between the Black Shroud and Gyr Abania, numerous historical conflicts have steeped its banks in death. In political terms, the river also delineates the shared boundary of the nations of Gridania and Ala Mhigo.

Schism



Castellum Velodyna

The Striped Hills

According to Sharlayan scholars, the horizontal stripes which mark the landscape east of the Velodyna River are evidence that the land once laid beneath the sea. The older layers are thought to have gradually risen above the surface, pushed upwards by immense pressures during the formation of Abalathia's Spine.

Schism

In a time out of mind, seeking to approach the sublimity of Rhalgr, a man began pummeling a mountain with his fists. After decades of nigh ceaseless striking, he succeeded in forming a great cavern in the mountain. This nameless soul is revered as the first monk of the Fist of Rhalgr, and the temple was later built here, within the hollow he had created.

The Circles of Answering

A training ground for monks, adherents would gather here when thunderstorms lashed the countryside with rain, wind, and lightning. Sitting in a circle and exposed to the elements, the monks would meditate on the truths proffered by the Destroyer—an experience said to have brought enlightenment to no few of Rhalgr's disciples.

Gyr Kehim

A monastery established some three centuries ago by Heimart, high priest of the Fist of Rhalgr. In the ancient Mhachi language, the name means "one's mirage"—a reference to the arduous training that monks underwent to face their inner self in their quest to master both body and mind.

The Peering Stones

Virdjala

The arid valley to the east of Castellum Velodyna has been home to the Ananta people since antiquity. That the name for this stark canyon translates to "pristine" is characteristic of the Ananta and their tendency to perceive the world around them in terms of beauty.

Castellum Velodyna

Built upon the bridge over the Velodyna River, this imperial fortification serves as a critical waypoint for supplies, connecting the many military installations to the east with Baelsar's Wall to the west. Rising sky-high from the center is a great tower that provides moorage for airships.

The Peering Stones

The village of the Miqo'te M tribe, perched high atop a crag. Its position affords inhabitants a commanding view of their entire territory, and neither trespasser nor prey may travel through unnoticed. As the Garleans view hunting cultures with contempt, imperial rule has proven harder upon them than most.

Vira Nilya

This settlement belongs to the Vira, a faction of Ananta who chose to fight alongside the Ala Mhigan Resistance in a bid to break free of the Empire's subjugation. The founding of Vira Nilya was an important step to distance themselves from the Qalyana, the larger of the two tribes.

Qalyana Nilya

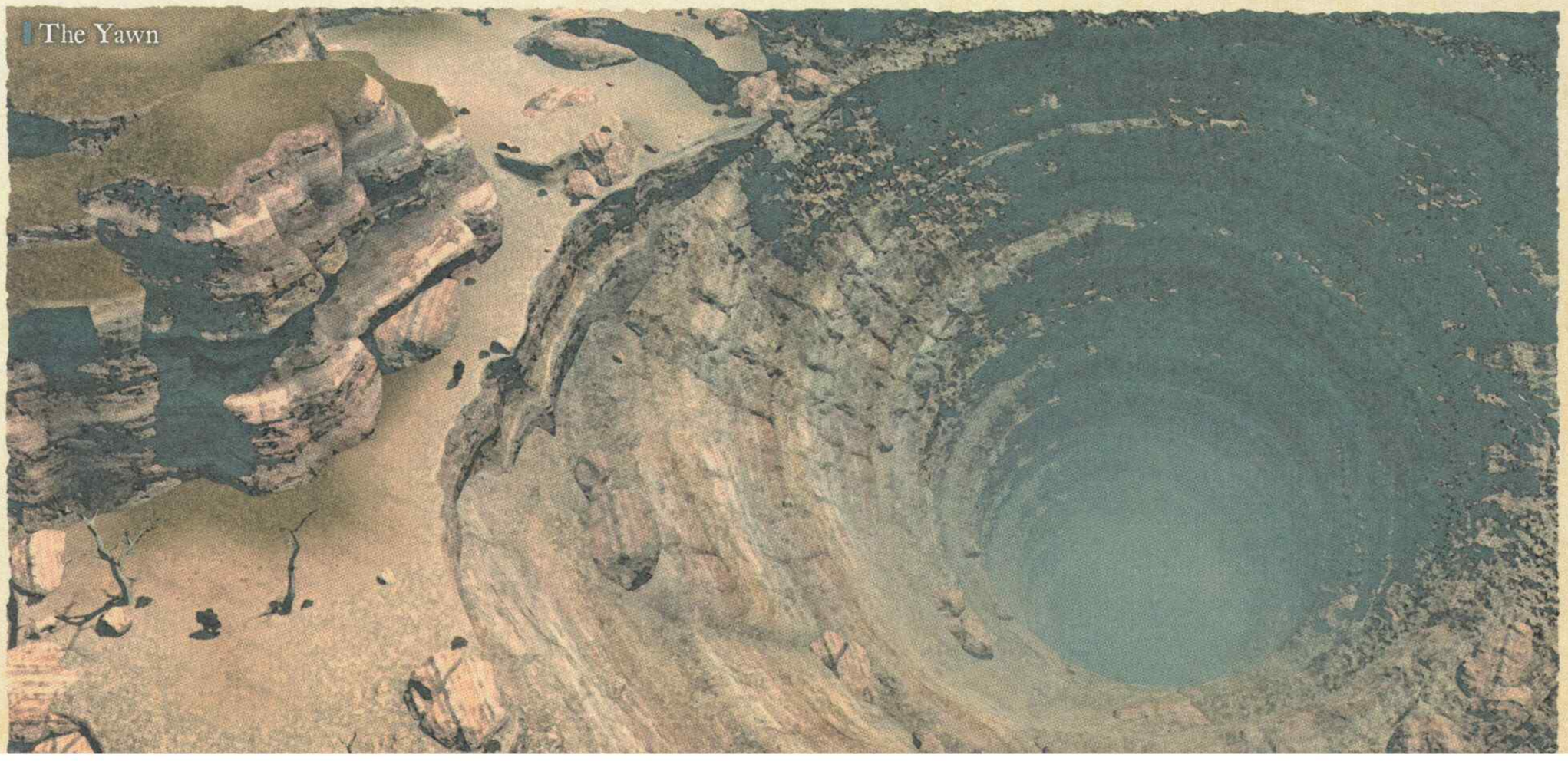
As the stronghold of the dominant Qalyana tribe, this settlement is built on a far grander scale than that of Vira Nilya. It is interesting to note that in the Ananta tongue, "Qalyana" equates to "beauty" or "virtue," whilst "Vira" is used to describe one who exhibits bravery.

Djanan Qhat

A distinctive castle of clay built by the Ananta, housing within its depths a shrine to the goddess Lakshmi, Lady of Bliss. For this reason it was given its name, which means "mother's bed" in the Ananta tongue. At present it is occupied by the dominant Qalyana tribe.

The Yawn

Writhing with a mysterious pink substance, this cavernous hollow was torn from the earth during the titanic struggle between Omega and Shinryu. In a bid to bring down its steely foe, the primal unleashed a beam of all-consuming light from its maw, the slightest veering of which could have been disastrous for the nearby M tribe village.



The Yawn

The Peaks

Situated midway along the eastern arm of Abalathia's Spine, this region is characterized by a succession of steep, stony pinnacles which grow in height and density the further south one travels. When overland trade was still profitable, the area was a hub for caravans bound for the Near East.

The Last Forest

During their escape from the floodwaters of the Sixth Umbral Calamity, those who hailed from the lush lands of Yafaem and the Black Shroud lamented these trees as the last "forest" they were to see. Considering the sparsity of the growth, the term has been deemed somewhat overgenerous.

Emprise

In the past, monks who completed their training at the Temple of the Fist were honored in a ceremony held in this hallowed cloister. Once alive with activity, thronging with monks and pilgrims alike, it was laid to waste at the mad king's command and is now home to naught but ghosts of the past.

Grymm & Enid

Grymm and Enid were a married couple who wandered the mountains for two dawnings of the sun as they sought refuge from the great floods. Upon finding water, they fell to their knees to slake their terrible thirst. But they drank too much, too quickly, and perished by the side of the ponds which now bear their names: the larger Grymm, and the smaller Enid.

Byron's Bread

A stonecutter from Ala Gannha, Byron turned his hand to farming when the quarry industry went into decline. Though he hoped merely to provide his family's daily bread, the dry climate and hard ground defeated him at every turn. The late Byron's dusty patch of land is now tended by his grandchildren, who struggle to produce a worthy crop in honor of his memory.

The Ziggurat

The Sixth Umbral Calamity wreaked havoc upon the realm's aetherial flow, giving rise to unstable weather patterns. Desiring to correct the disturbance, descendants of the Amdapori and the Mhachi set aside past differences and came together to build the Ziggurat, which served as a weight to still the land's writhing currents of aether.

The Carmine Kitchen

The Qiqirn bandits who scurry about the Ziggurat use this area for meal preparation, splattering the stones with the lurid lifeblood of their captured prey. Rumors abound that the rat-like beastmen will feast on two-legged game just as readily as four.

Ala Gannha

Situated in the Peaks' northern reaches, this village once flourished through its quarry, the beautiful stone sourced and cut here used to build the royal palace of Ala Mhigo. Such prosperous days, however, have become but a memory, and the villagers are faced with the harsh realities of a failing industry.

The Ziggurat

Rustrock

Taking its name from the land's predominantly reddish hue, this area was once crowded with stonecutters carving out blocks for building materials. Though quarries were common in the days of the Ala Mhigan monarchy, Rustrock is now overrun with dangerous wildlife and other monstrous denizens.

Mason's Falls

Stone quarried from a location further upriver would be lashed securely to a raft before being pushed over this waterfall. Yet it was so long ago when a raft was last dropped that those who know of the practice—and the reason for the falls' name—are dwindling in number every year.

Heather Falls

A short distance upriver from Mason's Falls, this cascade is named for the color of its churning waters' froth—a delicate white reminiscent of heather. The plant in question, unlike the hardy native flowers blanketing the falls' surrounds, would struggle to bloom in the region's barren soil, however.

Hidden Tear

A shrine for honoring the departed, backed by a waterfall whose constant roaring muffles one's sobs and whose spraying hides one's tears. Such religious rites were outlawed under imperial rule, and for a long time people could not hold even the simplest services to remember loved ones.

Sleeping Stones

This quarry was once worked by Ala Gannhan stonecutters, the rock said to slumber in silence between each clanging shift. Yet now, with none coming to harvest their bounty, the stones may never again awaken to the kiss of pick or chisel.

The Ephor

Carved in the likeness of Rhalgr in his arbiter incarnation, this statue seemed ever poised to pass divine judgment. The demonic visage and accusatory finger were destroyed, however, when the Garlean army conducted a purge of all religious iconography.

Whitherwander

This winding path was once walked by young men and women seeking to enter the monkhood. It is said that enchanted devices would befuddle those whose concentration wavered, meaning that any unfocused souls would soon lose their way.

Momoroon's Milk

Momoroon, the compassionate greatmother, leads the band of blood-crazed Qiqirn which calls this village home. Tales are told of the "milk" the greatmother feeds to her children—a rice gruel tainted with strange medicines said to nurture a brutal temperament.

Ala Gannha

Ala Ghiri

Wightrock

This elevated plateau in the southern reaches of the Peaks was originally known as "Whiterock" for its pale and washed-out colors. Traveling merchants who lost many a companion to the area's vicious wildlife felt that a reference to the dead was the more apt description.

Goodblade

Once the largest caravan waypoint in the region, much of Goodblade was reduced to rubble in the Empire's invasion. Despite its overall ruined state, the chocobo stables and some few other structures yet stand.

Ala Ghiri

Situated along the highroad connecting Ala Mhigo to the rest of Aldenard, Ala Ghiri once served as a hub and vital waypoint for overland trade with the east. After the Garlean invasion left the majority of overland routes destroyed, that trade came to focus upon catering to the needs of the occupation force.

The Scabbard

According to legend, this wind-carved corridor was used by the Destroyer as a sheath for one of his blades. For the local folk, the passage serves as a convenient shortcut when traveling from Coldhearth to Ala Ghiri.

Specula Imperatoris

After claiming Gyr Abania for its own, the Empire erected this monstrous tower in order to maintain watch over the region. A communications spire was later added in preparation for the next phase of the Eorzean invasion, followed by an energy transmitting device for activating the Ultima Weapon.

The Choler

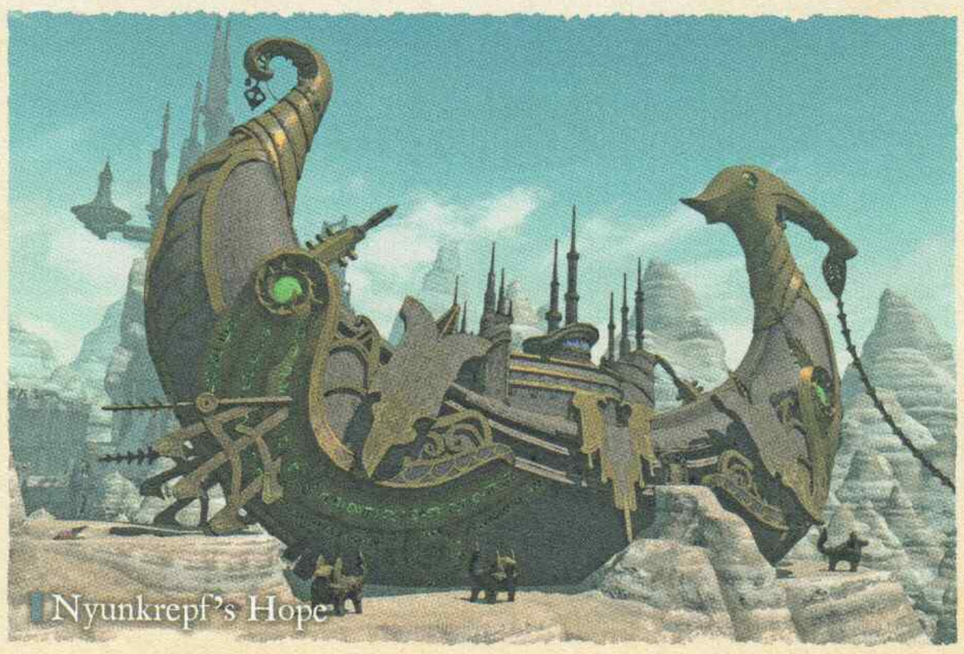
Locals claim that drinking the muddy water which pools at the bottom of a certain canyon in Wightrock is to invite immediate death. Upon conducting an exhaustive study, however, an Ul'dahn alchemist found the lethality of the harmless liquid to be an exaggeration born of folklore.

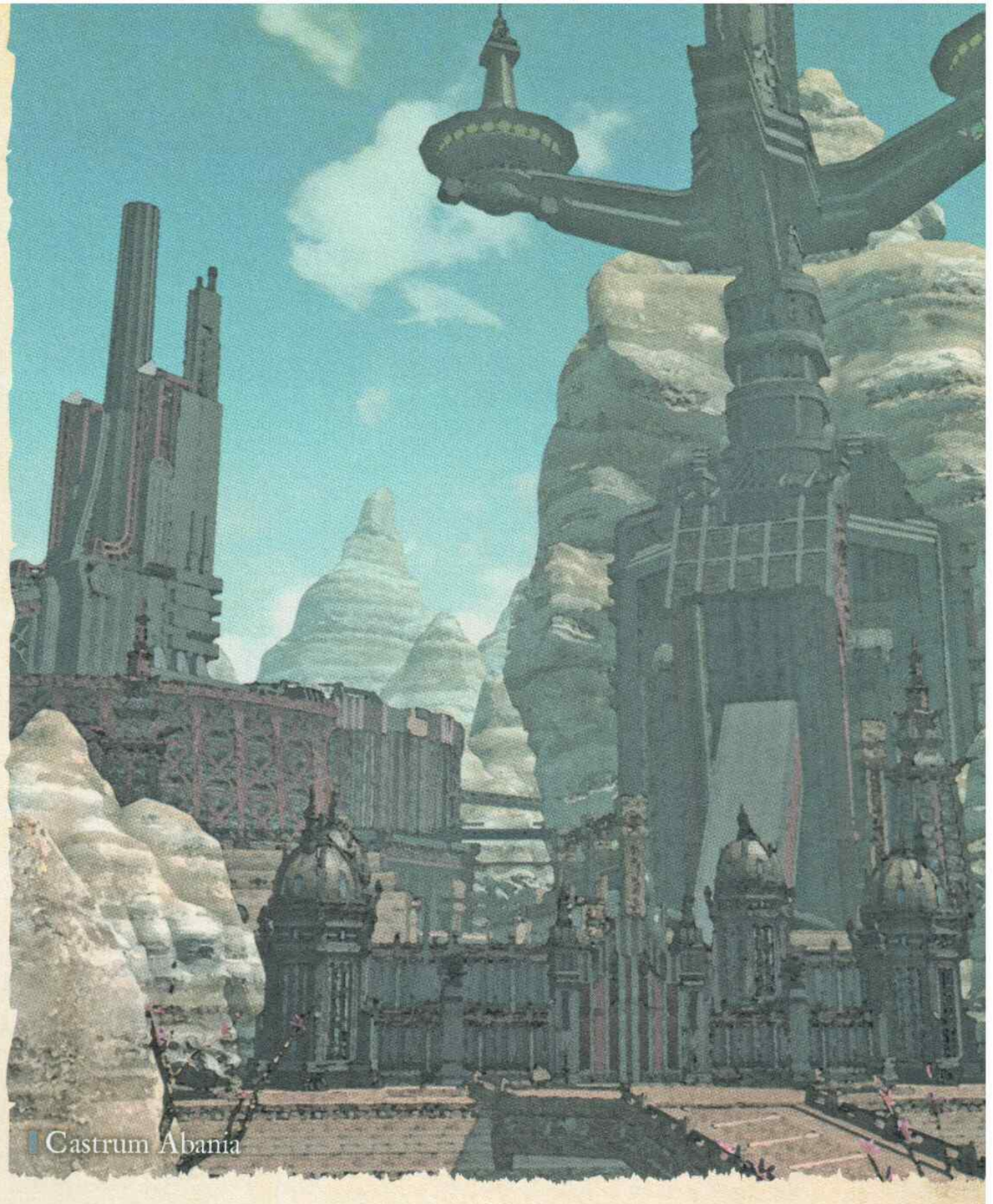
The Arms of Meed

Cleanse your mind, hone your flesh, redeem your soul—so teaches the Fist of Rhalgr. The temple was built in accordance with this belief, that those who have committed wrongs might atone for their sins. Seven years of grueling training here will earn one the Destroyer's forgiveness no matter the weight of his crime.

Nyunkrepf's Hope

When the Sixth Umbral Calamity befell Eorzea and the realm was transformed into a sea, this great vessel, built by a man hailing far from the north named Nyunkrepf, saved full many lives. Having taken aboard countless souls drifting in the floodwaters, it was finally transported by magicks to its current resting place.


Nyunkrepf's Hope


Castrum Abania

Mount Yorn

Upon spying a sharply pointed summit from the deck of his flood-tossed ark, Nyunkrepf mistook this craggy formation as the Isle of Yorn. Though the mountain is quite some distance from the island in the Northern Empty, the appellation nevertheless remains to this day.

Castrum Abania

This imperial citadel rises from the mountains on the eastern edge of the Peaks. After the Battle of Silvertear Skies, Gaius was not eager to repeat the disastrous fate of the *Agrius*, and ordered the construction of a cannon capable of repelling even the most gigantic of adversaries.

Radiata

A modest village atop Mount Yorn, this settlement was populated by citizens who had submitted to imperial rule. The village's name is said to be a Garlean word representative of the lines of loyal workers which radiated out towards the nearby Castrum Abania and Specula Imperatoris.

The Ironroad

Laid upon the rocky ground to assist with the smooth conveyance of supplies, this metalclad path stretches between Castrum Abania and Specula Imperatoris. For the native Gyr Abanians, its uniformly dull and black surface was another unsettling reminder of their continued subjugation.

Coldhearth

Tucked away in a forgotten corner of the Peaks, this sleepy hamlet is known for producing mercenaries, a tradition that was born out of necessity. With its lands yielding precious little bounty, youths took to leaving hearth and home behind to trade their sword arms for coin, most notable among them being Raubahn Aldynn, the Bull of Ala Mhigo.

Coldhearth

The Lochs

Dominated by the expanse of Loch Seld, the salt-laden waters of this region play the role of moat for the fortress-city of Ala Mhigo. As a locale of strategic importance on the border with Ilsabard, the Lochs have been the site of countless battles and skirmishes.

The High Bank

Occupying the western reaches of the Lochs, the High Bank features a level path which extends to the banks of Loch Seld, and from there to the city proper. Conversely, the west half of the area rises into precipitous mountains, the heights of which can only be accessed via steep and winding roads.

Porta Praetoria

Formerly a checkpoint along the main highroad to Ala Mhigo, it was incorporated into the newly constructed Castrum Abania. Prior to the Garlean invasion, the area bustled with merchants bound for the Near East, but mercantile endeavors have since given way to military ones.

The Firkins

These cannon emplacements were built by the Ala Mhigan military to protect the city and its trade routes. Whilst an official name once existed in the records, the locals took to calling the circular structures "firkins" for their resemblance to a certain type of ale cask.

Demilune

Some fifty years ago, this crescent-shaped canyon provided a secluded hideaway for a bandit gang infamous for preying upon the trade routes. When Ala Mhigan soldiers at last discovered their camp, the resulting skirmish culminated in the death of every last brigand.

Sothwatch

A watchtower erected to guard against invaders that may emerge from the cloudy expanses to the south. In the event of a threat, a flaming arrow is loosed from the top to alert those in the city. The Garleans saw no use for the tower, however, and it has stood empty in the years following Ala Mhigo's fall.

Sali Monastery

A residence for elderly monks of the Fist of Rhalgr, Sali Monastery also provided a home for orphaned children. Laborers who fled the Saltery also sought to take shelter here during the siege of Ala Mhigo.

The Dark of Lasting Cumber

This isolated cavern was frequented by the monks of Sali Monastery as a place of meditation. The natural stone pillars supporting the tonzes of mountain rock above are likened to a life burdened by miseries, and the chamber's unusual name is the result of such a comparison.

Aenadem Ei

A location of religious significance for the Fist of Rhalgr, "Aenadem Ei" is a geographical name of Skallic origin. The meaning behind it, however, is no longer understood.

Rothlyt

Beneath this perpetual bank of clouds to the south stretches a lifeless wasteland where sunlight never reaches the ground. Traveling further south will bring one to the ocean, and the Rothlyt Sound.

The Pauper's Lode

The glinting walls of this expansive cavern hint at the existence of precious metals, but the mineral responsible for the glow is, in fact, worth precious little. A humorous reference to a poor man's misfortune took root in popular parlance, and ever after was the locale known as the Pauper's Lode.

Sweetwater

Hidden deep within this cave system is a natural freshwater spring. Those who have drunk of the spring's bounty describe the taste as that of divine nectar when compared to the briny waters of the loch. The remote location of the source, however, makes piping the liquid to the city an impractical endeavor at best.

Stacks

Abandoned during the imperial occupation, this now-ruined settlement housed the soldiers who manned the Pyre, as well as their immediate families. The handful of scraggly trees in the area once provided the inhabitants with a convenient source of firewood.

Loch Seld

A saltwater lake of impressive size, Loch Seld is also surprisingly deep beneath its placid surface. And lying unseen on the lake's murky bed are the ruins of Skalla, a city of stone from the Fifth Astral Era. The calamity's floods filled the ravine in which it was built, scouring the salt from the earth and forming an expansive body of briny water.

The Saltery

This simple village on Loch Seld's western shore is famous for its salt refinery and high-quality salted produce. The Saltery's operations saw a steady decline under the oppressive rule of the Empire, but Ala Mhigo's liberation—and a helping hand from Sultana Nanamo and the East Aldenard Trading Company—has sparked a rapid return to its former prosperity.

Lochwatch

As the name implies, this Ala Mhigan-built watchtower was constructed to allow an unobstructed view over Loch Seld. History tells that many such sentinels once dotted the roadways, ensuring safe passage for travelers and merchant caravans.

The Destroyer

This towering depiction of Rhalgr was second in size only to the massive statue which stands before the Temple of the Fist. Feeling threatened by the monks' faith, however, the mad king Theodoric ordered the Destroyer pulled down, and its shattered remnants now rest at the bottom of Loch Seld.

The Divine Audience

A magnificent altar fashioned in the form of a stairway extending high above Loch Seld, at the top of which worshipers may come face-to-face with the statue of the Destroyer. Formerly a place of piety, it earned a bloody reputation when the King of Ruin took to using it as an execution site.

The Ruiner

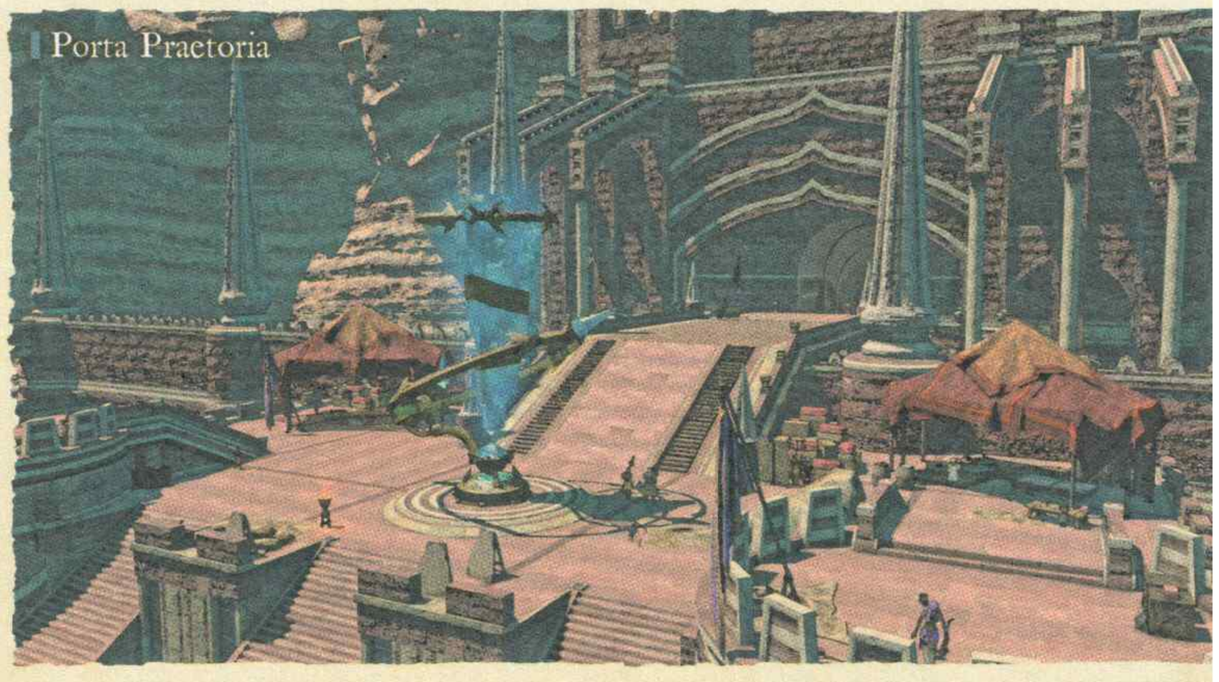
King Theodoric proclaimed himself the mortal agent of Nymeia, She who stands above Rhalgr, and demanded his subjects venerate him in Her stead. A statue was raised in his likeness, and in the twilight days of the mad king's reign, his worshipers, be they driven by fear or piety, flocked to pay homage.

The White Aisle

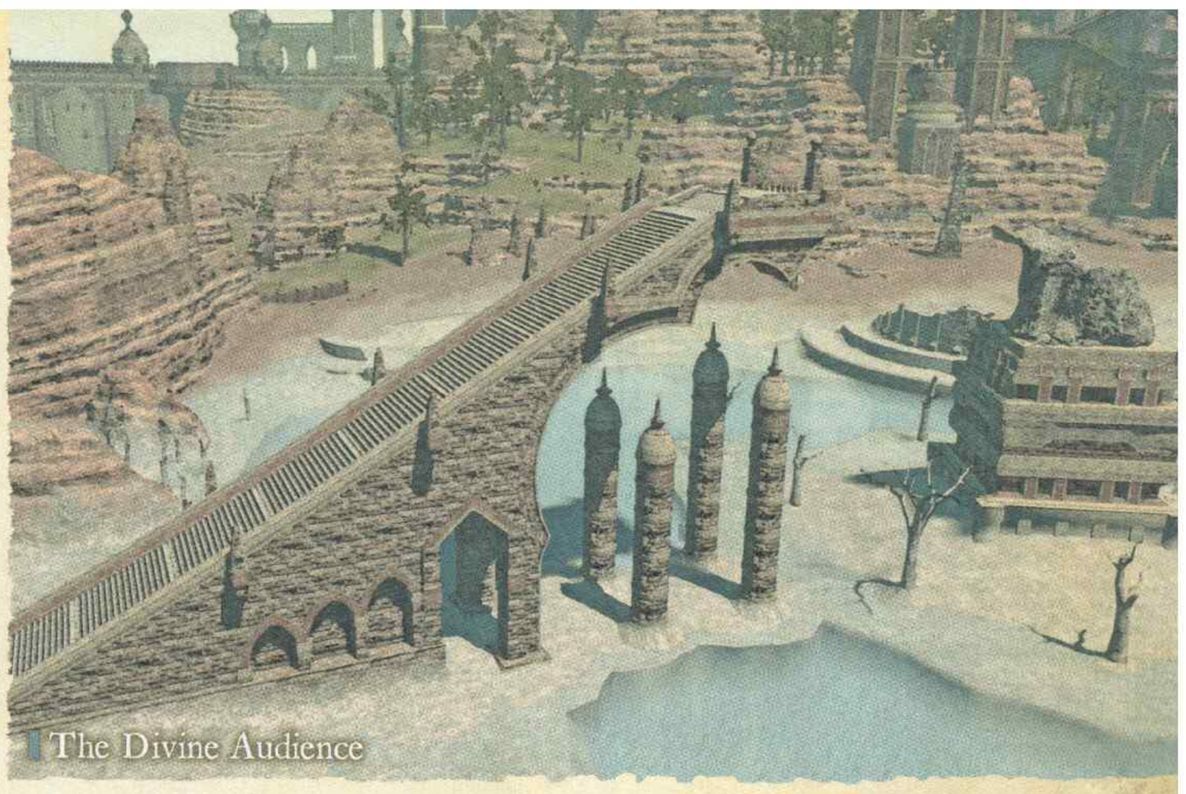
Built upon a corridor of land across the stark white loch, this raised walkway is the shortest route to the gates of the city. Heavily fortified with cannon platforms, its defenses were nevertheless powerless to prevent the advance of the Empire's airships from the northeast.

The Queen's Gardens

These gardens were planted at the behest of Queen Edila, a monarch who ruled in Ala Mhigo two centuries past. To encourage the greenery's growth, vast quantities of the city's precious well water was used to dampen the parched ground—a deed which inflated water prices so dramatically that many less-fortunate commoners are said to have perished from thirst.


Porta Praetoria

The Saltery


The Divine Audience

The Ala Mhigan Quarter

A residential area situated to the south of Ala Mhigo, built to accommodate the city's growing population. As the newest district to be added, it is a considerable distance from the royal palace, and was expected to become an enclave for the less well-to-do. Under Garlean rule, it more or less retained that status, serving to quarter the Aan—those without citizenship. During that time, it was also known as the Peregrine Quarter—a reference to the derogatory name by which the imperial occupiers called Ala Mhigan natives.

Gylbarde's Gate

The main entrance to the Ala Mhigan Quarter is named in honor of General Gylbarde and his griffin-rider regiment. Bold adventurers unlocked this gate from the inside after infiltrating the city via an underwater tunnel, providing Resistance forces ingress during the early stages of the battle to retake Ala Mhigo.

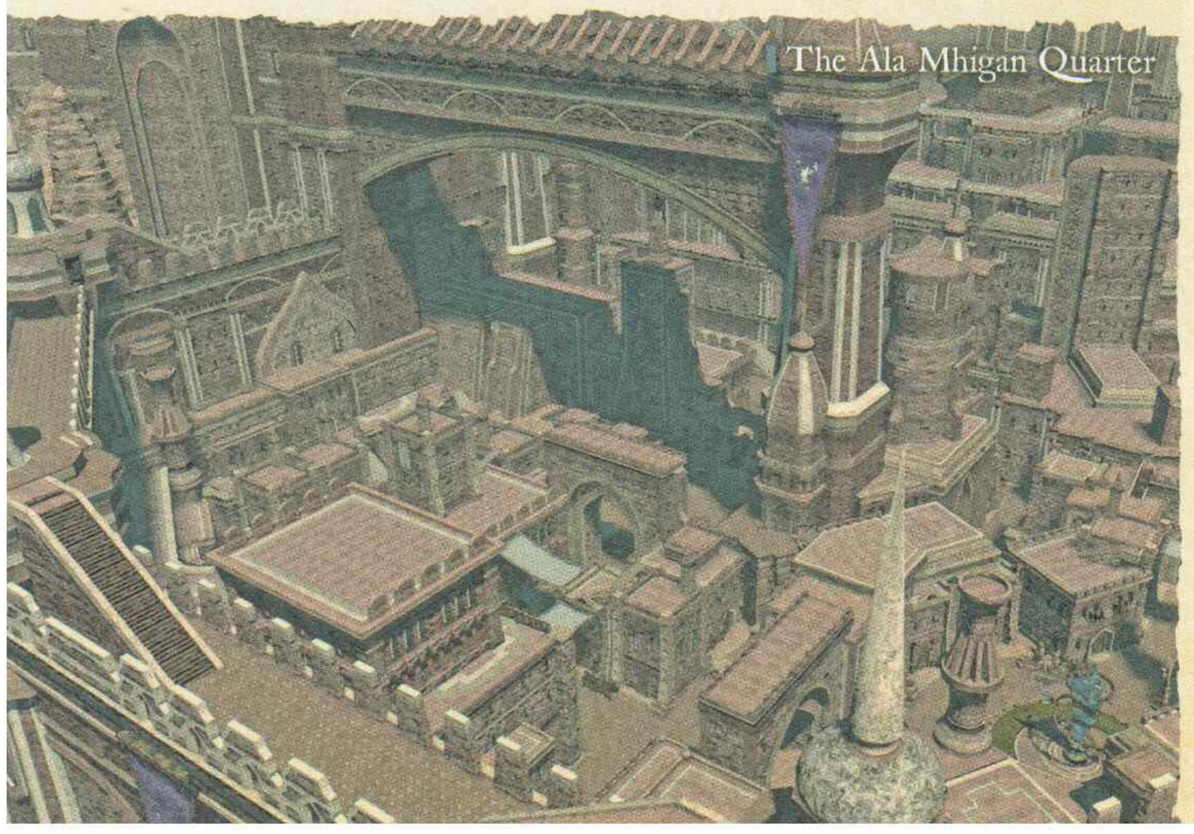
The Fourth Royal Casern

Relatively new barracks constructed at the behest of King Theodoric, this building was used to house the monarch's elite guard—the Corpse Brigade. Owing to the Brigade's unswerving loyalty to the letter of the mad king's orders, the populace regarded its members with fear and bitter hatred.

The Resonatorium

Originally a temple of the Fist of Rhalgr, these chambers were commandeered by the XIVth Imperial Legion. Later, when the crown prince Zenos was appointed viceroy, he gave the facilities over to his subordinate—a man by the name of Aulus—who converted them into a research laboratory for experimental technologies.

Bloodhowe


The Ala Mhigan Quarter

Abalathia's Skull

This region lies at the eastern extreme of the mountain range which stretches across the continent of Aldenard. As the expanse of Abalathia's Spine was so named for its resemblance to the realm's backbone, it follows that the knot at its end must perforce be the skull.

The Third Royal Casern

Built in the time of the monarchy, these barracks were occupied by the Ala Mhigan Royal Guard. For their opposition to King Theodoric's tyranny, they suffered myriad punishments, including the summary beheading of their captain. The royal guard is also remembered for cooperating with agents of the revolution.

Cotter Tor

This rise takes its name from Anshelm Cotter, the man who conquered all the lands of Gyr Abania. It was from here, atop the tor, that the first king of Ala Mhigo gazed out across the shining loch, and chose the site for his kingdom's capital.

Aenadem Ol

This Fifth Astral Era ruin has been rebuilt as a ceremonial site. It is believed that both the circle here, and its twin, Aenadem Ei, were once host to Skallic religious observances to honor the lost souls of the drowned city.

Bloodhowe

The largest burial site in Ala Mhigo, these hallowed grounds are lined with row upon row of heavy stone coffins—a visible testament to the nation's enduring history. The remains of imperial officers slain in battle, including those of the Empire's crown prince, Zenos yae Galvus, are also interred here in Bloodhowe.

The Tomb of the Errant Sword

Ala Mhigo is a nation famous for producing mercenaries, and it is not uncommon for these sellswords to perish in foreign lands. With the bodies of the slain often beyond retrieval, this cenotaph was erected for those mourners who, at the very least, wished to inter a sword or other such personal weapon as a means of honoring the dead.

The Song of Kings

Composed of a series of stately corridors, the Song of Kings is the final resting place for Ala Mhigo's monarchs and their families. Monks once inscribed canticles upon its walls, the words intended to offer solace to royal souls, but the crypts fell into disrepair after memorial rites for the deceased were forbidden by the Empire.

The Tomb of King Manfred

A monarch who reigned in Ala Mhigo a century ago, King Manfred would often lead his own troops into battle and was much admired for his bravery. With the custom of honoring the dead fallen out of practice, however, it is rumored that the regent's disgruntled spirit has risen from its grave.

The Royal Hunting Grounds

This comparatively lush reserve was more than just a place to enjoy the sport of hunting—it was also a venue for royals and nobles to socialize, as well as a field for military training. Ledgers show that a resident caretaker was employed for the express purpose of maintaining the grounds and managing the population of game animals.

HINGASHI

To the east of Othard, across the Ruby Sea, lies the island nation of Hingashi. Though it is now known to be the birthplace of the ninjutsu and samurai traditions, little else can be said with confidence about this isolated land and its reclusive peoples.

Overview

Flag	The flag many associate with Hingashi—that of a black circle with three waves curving inward—is in fact not a national standard, but rather the banner of the Mitsurugi clan, which currently rules Hingashi.
Motto	Live with Conviction
Government	True power in Hingashi rests in the hands of the bakufu, a military government. However, the official head of state is the emperor, who "entrusts" matters of governance to the shogun and his officials. For generations, the royal household has seen fit to favor the Mitsurugi clan, whose sons have served as strong leaders. It should be noted that while the current figurehead is male, the right of succession is not restricted to men alone—absolute primogeniture is the Hingan tradition.
Leader	Emperor Reigen
Ruling Body	The Mitsurugi clan leads the bakufu at present. Their influence over a given region can vary greatly, though, as they must retain the support of many wealthy families which have their own agendas.
Racial Distribution	Far Eastern Hyur: 50% Far Eastern Roegadyn: 15% Au Ra Raen: 10% Other: 25%
Religion	The people of Hingashi generally profess a belief in the kami, a legion of divine spirits said to exist in all aspects of nature, from mountains and rivers to the very crops Hingans grow and consume. These kami feature prominently in several creation myths, though the particulars of each tale differ from region to region. To declare such myths part of a formal religion may be misleading, though, as the Hingans do not engage in any standardized rituals, nor do they consistently favor any given kami over another—a being deeply venerated in one land may be virtually ignored in another. Their faith might be best described as a pragmatic amalgamation of those practices which appeal to the individual most. Suffice it to say, the average Eorzean may struggle to comprehend this approach.
Industries	Agriculture: Rice is a staple of Hingan cuisine, and its cultivation vastly outstrips that of all other crops. Its impact on Hingan society can clearly be seen in how farmland is valued and taxed according to the quantity of rice it could potentially produce. Fishing: As an island nation, Hingashi has ever enjoyed the sea's bounty. The peoples of various regions have developed their own techniques over the centuries—some communities favor spearfishing, which demands more of the individual, whereas others came to rely on trawling, which requires more coordinated action. Textiles: Having adopted sericulture from Othard, Hingan weavers applied their distinct dyeing techniques to create exquisite new styles of clothing. So valued are such items by foreign traders that they are worth their weight in gold. Steelworks: The katana is perhaps the quintessential Hingan weapon, its design having been refined over generations by legendary swordsmiths belonging to several clans. These clans continue to improve upon the ancient traditions, and so their works new and old command a high price at market.
Beliefs	The Hingan people value patience and perseverance in all things. Be one a farmer or a soldier, he should devote himself to his chosen profession. Indeed, if one were to liken life to a road, the traveler must be mindful of every step, that they might learn from the experience and be better for it. This concept manifests in the very language of Hingashi, for the Hingan terms for countless martial and artistic pursuits contain the word "path," further emphasizing the mindset one is expected to have.
Diet	Rice and fish are mainstays of the Hingan diet, and are frequently served together at meals. One of the more well-known examples of this is sushi, in which a small portion of vinegared rice is pressed together, and atop that is laid a thin slice of raw fish. Though at a glance it may appear to be a simple dish, Hingan culinarians must train for tens of summers before they are considered masters of the technique. Miso and soy sauce, as well as fish stock and fermented foods, feature heavily in traditional Hingan cuisine.

History

A Forgotten Past

Regrettably, there is little to no information concerning Hingashi prior to the Fourth Astral Era. Extant Allagan records currently available for study make no mention of the islands either. Therefore, it must be assumed that while the Allagan Empire ruled the Three Great Continents at the height of its power, its dominion did not extend to what would later be known as Hingashi. This presumption is further supported by the fact that, in the limited archaeological surveys of the island undertaken with the permission of the bakufu, not a single Allagan ruin has been discovered. This is not to say there was no evidence of Allagan influence whatsoever, though, as small artifacts such as jewelry and tomestones were unearthed.

The prevailing theory at this time is that the islands were either deserted or home to only a token population prior to the Fourth Umbral Calamity, at which point refugees fleeing the collapse of the Empire came en masse. The Allagan trinkets found in Hingashi were brought by these new arrivals, who subsequently cast off the last vestiges of their fallen society and strove to create a new one free from the trappings of the past. Again, it should be stressed that this is a theory based on limited evidence, and it should not be taken as incontrovertible fact.

The First Emperor

The oldest surviving primary sources discovered in Hingashi are wooden tablets which date back approximately three millennia. They were found on Koshu, the nation's largest island, and appear to be a record of taxes owed to a wealthy landowner. From this we can conclude that Hingan society was sufficiently developed to support complex systems of taxation.

Only two hundred years later, a clan in the western plains of Koshu rose to prominence following the fall of its neighboring rivals. The clan's head declared himself a great king and launched a campaign to bring all others to heel, and in the span of three hundred years, his descendants managed to unite the whole of western Koshu beneath one banner. As time passed, subsequent leaders were declared emperors, and if records are to be believed, the current imperial household can trace its ancestry all the way to this first ancient king.

An Age of Blood and Strife

For nearly a millennium, an unbroken line of emperors held absolute power. However, fifteen hundred years ago, at the dawn of the Sixth Astral Era, a dispute over succession plunged Hingashi into civil war. Two ruled—an emperor in the east, and an empress in the west—and for the better part of three centuries their descendants fought against one another. The resulting chaos greatly reduced the power and prestige of the royal bloodline.

In order to claim victory, the royals increasingly turned to the vassals sworn to serve them. To secure their martial support, they granted them new rights and promised new privileges. So focused were the royals on defeating their hated rivals that they did not consider the wider implications of their generosity until it was too late. When at last the dust settled, an emperor in the east reigned triumphant, but as a figurehead, for he had surrendered nearly all his power to other clans. Emboldened, these clans then turned upon one another, and a new struggle for supremacy began.

The Rise of the Mitsurugi Clan

Over the course of six hundred years, Hingashi was ravaged by the fires of war. Clans seized every opportunity to strike at their enemies, and were in turn attacked by other equally ruthless foes. In such an environment, people found new ways to survive. Those born into poverty could rise to prominence through strength of arms, and indeed, there were farmers that became landed generals. Those who lacked such talents could resort to trickery and deception, and indeed, there were tales of foolish lords betrayed by their vassals. No one was safe, and naught was guaranteed.

So it was that Hingashi was awash with blood until the Mitsurugi clan, rulers of Onokuni, came to power. Though their leader, Kanzan, was not skilled in the arts of war, he was a peerless politician and strategist. While others resorted to violence to achieve their ends, he forged alliances through marriage and employed ninja to gain vital intelligence. In this way, he not only defended his clan's holdings from outsiders, but outmaneuvered his rivals so that when at last the decisive battle came, the Mitsurugi clan alone stood above all others. Kanzan once more demonstrated his foresight when he restored the imperial household to power, declaring that the mandate he had to rule had been bequeathed to him by the Hingan emperor. In doing so, he appeared to honor ancient tradition and appeased those who had yearned to return to halcyon days, even if in sooth the Mitsurugi clan remained the true power behind the throne.

The Opening of Kugane

Though the Mitsurugi Bakufu faced resistance from several clans, it was a far cry from the chaos which had once consumed the island nation. Peace had come to Hingashi, and while the clans were not wont to relinquish their independence—and indeed took many measures to preserve it—they could not deny that there was some benefit in cooperating with the new government. No longer preoccupied with internal strife, the people were, at long last, free to look beyond their borders and see what wonders the world held—and many were quite eager to do so.

In recent years, however, the bakufu has grown wary of foreign interests. The rise of the Garlean Empire and its aggressive expansion with the aid of magitek has not gone unnoticed, nor has the struggle of the Domans across the Ruby Sea not been a source of some concern. The fall of Dalmasca served to underscore this, and spurred Hingashi to, like Radz-at-Han before it, formally declare themselves neutral with regards to Garlemald's actions. As such, they will not intervene in the affairs of Yanxia nor Nagxia.

For the time being, the bakufu maintains its strict isolationist policies and devotes the majority of its attention to internal affairs, whilst permitting only a small measure of foreign trade to take place via the port of Kugane on Shishu. The port is also home to several embassies, including most notably that of the Garlean Empire. Indeed, Kugane could be said to exemplify the nation's precarious position: all are welcome, but none are friends.

Organizations

The Imperial Court

Presided over by Emperor Reigen, the imperial court was once the center of Hingan political power, but over time has lost virtually all influence. By all accounts, it continues to exist only as a concession to historical tradition. In accordance with said tradition, the bakufu is "permitted" to rule by the grace of the emperor, but there ends the court's official involvement in matters of governance.

The emperor and his cadre busy themselves by promoting the arts through activities such as poetry recitals and tea parties. He also plays an important role in various religious ceremonies to ensure bountiful harvests and prosperous trade.

The Bakufu

Hingashi's true heart of governance, the bakufu was first established by Kanzan of the Mitsurugi clan following a prolonged period of internal strife. Successive leaders have all come from this powerful family, which rules from the capital of Bukyo, within Onokuni, their ancestral home on the island of Koshu. The bakufu has consolidated its political and military might at Bukyo Castle, where many samurai are called to serve as bureaucrats for a time. Their power is far from absolute, though, as many regions and clans retain a measure of autonomy, resulting in a system that may be best described as federalism.

Inokuni

The great Hakutei River flows through this domain of the Yatsurugi clan, which has long been known for its fertile soil and rice of surpassing quality. However, some few years ago, prolonged rains saw the banks of the river flood, and much of the clan's farmland was lost. For the sake of her people, the young Princess Yuki resolved to sell several of the Yatsurugi's sacred treasures in order to fund the reconstruction efforts.

Yuki Yatsurugi

"My people are on the brink of starvation. If I do not do something, all of their sacrifices will mean nothing."

A Raen of only seventeen summers, Princess Yuki succeeded her father as head of the Yatsurugi after he succumbed to a sickness. Unfortunately for the young leader, this transition coincided with the flooding of the Hakutei River, which ruined much of the clan's farmlands. As if the kami were conspiring to punish her and her people, five of the Yatsurugi's most cherished treasures were then stolen.

It was this last incident which spurred Princess Yuki to take drastic action. Having trained in the arts of the shinobi since childhood, she believed she had the skills necessary to hunt down the perpetrators. Her journey led her far west to Eorzea, where with the aid of the Doman ninja Oboro and his Western ninja allies, she at last reclaimed three of the clan's treasures, which she then sold to raise funds for the restoration of their farmlands. She has since resumed her formal duties, and is the picture of grace and responsibility—though she still has her private indulgences, such as anmitsu, a type of sweet bean and seaweed jelly.

Suenokuni

The southern coast of Shishu, long ruled by the Buhen clan, was considered an ideal location for the construction of a port to receive foreign traders passing through the Ruby Sea. Due to various entanglements resulting from arranged marriages, however, the clan fell out of favor with the Mitsurugi while the decision was still being deliberated. As a conciliatory gesture, the Buhen formally gifted the land upon which the port was to be constructed to the bakufu. In so doing, though they lost a portion of their holdings, they ultimately benefitted greatly from the prosperity brought by the presence of Kugane within their domain, as well as strengthened their ties with the ruling Mitsurugi clan.

Zuiko Buhen

Rise with Valor, Walk with Honor
- Buhen Clan Maxim

The leader of the Buhen clan six hundred years ago, Zuiko—often portrayed with his famous blade, Tsunakiri, and astride his horse, Hizatsuki Kurige—is to this day regarded as a beloved hero of Shishu. Under his command, the meager forces of the Buhen managed to beat back the far larger invading armies of the Mitsurugi. Zuiko's feats so impressed Kanzan that he changed tactics and instead secured the Buhen clan's fealty by allowing them to retain control of their lands, as well as significant autonomy in managing their affairs. In this way, the Mitsurugi clan converted a bitter rival into a stalwart warden that would defend Hingashi's western front from foreign invaders for centuries to come—even if it meant that they must suffer the occasional vocal objections from a clan that would always consider themselves to be their equals, if not more. After leading a rich, storied life, Zuiko was laid to rest at the age of eighty-three.

Kugane Bugyo

The hand of the bakufu in Kugane, the bugyo is the most senior official in the local government. As Kugane is the sole open port within the whole of Hingashi, the expectations and burdens heaped upon this magistrate far exceed those his peers in other domains must endure. Should a foreigner commit a crime, for example, it would fall to the bugyo to administer appropriate punishment. However, in such matters he must consider the wider circumstances, as reckless action could lead to an international incident. Therefore, the position of bugyo of Kugane is not awarded lightly, and familial connections alone will not suffice. One must possess a keen mind and a talent for navigating politics domestic and foreign to even be considered eligible.

Ichian Matsuba

Honor in Service

- Matsuba Clan Maxim

Though many of the Matsuba clan have served as Kugane's bugyo—including the very first—the forty-seven-year-old magistrate of the city is nevertheless a man of some distinction. With the permission of the bakufu he studied abroad in Radz-at-Han, and following his return he served in a variety of important posts before finally being granted his position in Kugane. A master of multiple languages and an avid connoisseur of the arts, he regularly hosts Hingan dance performances at Kugane Castle. However, this is less a personal indulgence and more a means to entertain foreign dignitaries, and in so doing create opportunities to engage in "cultural exchange," much in the same way an Eorzean politician might organize a ball to bring together the influential elite. Alas, one such recent event was targeted by an insurgent faction vehemently opposed to foreign interests, and in the chaos the bugyo himself was taken hostage. Though he survived the ordeal, his position within the bakufu has been somewhat tenuous ever since.

Sekiseigumi

Per an agreement with the bakufu, the financial burdens of these protectors of Kugane must be shouldered by the Buhen, which is why roughly half of those who serve have ties to the clan and its vassals. The other half is comprised of men and women who come to the city from all across Hingashi out of an earnest desire to uphold the law. By and large, those who joined out of familial obligation seek only to fulfil their responsibilities without incident. They may be competent and diligent, but are unlikely to go above and beyond the call of duty. The other sort take to their duties with greater passion, be they training or peacekeeping, and while there are those who praise their dedication, the more zealous Sekiseigumi have a reputation for being quick to draw steel. Needless to say, it is a constant struggle for a captain to balance the concerns of both factions.

Kongo Miyama

"'Tis no secret that the bakufu is a cesspool of corruption, but in spite of this we must protect the peace. Such is a samurai's calling."

This former captain of the Sekiseigumi was born on a farm not far from the capital of Bukyo. In his youth, he studied swordsmanship, and later resolved to become a samurai that he might better his lot in life. Kongo was accepted into the Sekiseigumi, and his natural skill and earnest nature saw him rise quickly through the ranks, eventually attaining the position of captain following the untimely death of his predecessor. Alas, this good-hearted samurai with a fondness for egg soufflé and rice wine was blind to the treachery of his corrupt lieutenant, Shiden, and as a result was cut down in a duel with the insurgent leader Ugetsu. So it was that Kongo the Unyielding died having seen thirty-eight summers.

Shiden Unryu

"Samurai... Justice... These things are naught but hollow ideals, and they can change nothing. We must tear down the establishment and dig it up from its rotted roots!"

Born into poverty, Shiden was raised by farmers who labored in vain to pay their unconscionable taxes. Thinking there no recourse, they petitioned their liege lord for clemency, and for their courage they were burned alive as an example to their fellow villagers. As he watched his parents die in agony, Shiden was broken by the lunacy of the spectacle, and realized that only fundamental, violent revolution would right the scales of justice. He trained day and night with the katana and won a place in the Sekiseigumi, and swiftly rose through the ranks in his pursuit of power. Alas, despite earning the Unryu name and securing a position of leadership, he found himself ultimately beholden to the system he so deeply abhorred. Thus was this troubled soul with the heart of a poet perfectly placed to serve Ugetsu's interests, and when approached by the insurgent leader, Shiden readily agreed to assassinate His Excellency the Tairo. Fortunately, this plot was foiled by Makoto of the Sekiseigumi's First Squad, as well as a foreign adventurer. Following his defeat, Shiden Skyscream, as he was also known, took his own life at the age of thirty-five.

North Kugane

The northern half of Kugane is filled with businesses catering to the needs of foreign traders arriving at Pier #2. It is also home to the headquarters of the Sekiseigumi, who maintain order within the port city.

Bokaisen Hot Springs Proprietor

Karaku Okeya

"Men and women from all walks of life come here in search of rejuvenation—body and soul."

Artist and Connoisseur of Fine Teas

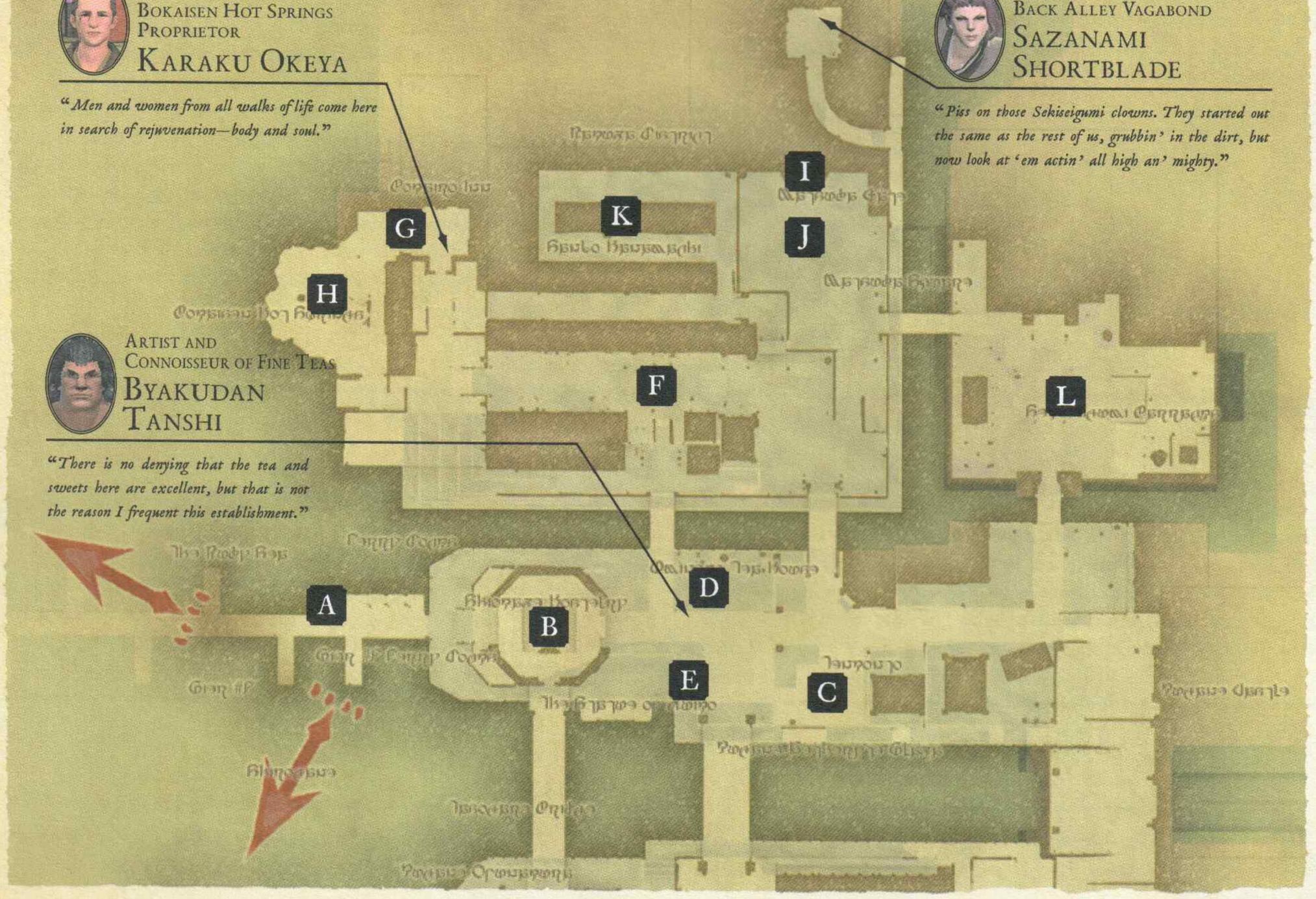
Byakudan Tanshi

"There is no denying that the tea and sweets here are excellent, but that is not the reason I frequent this establishment."

Back Alley Vagabond

Sazanami Shortblade

"Piss on those Sekiseigumi clowns. They started out the same as the rest of us, grubbin' in the dirt, but now look at 'em actin' all high an' mighty."



Pier #2

Shiokaze Hostelry

Tenkonto

The Rakuza District

A Pier #2

The majority of foreign vessels come to Kugane are received at Pier #2, where their cargo is inspected and appropriate duty is assessed. As this process can be somewhat time consuming, crews are encouraged to visit any of the nearby establishments.

B Shiokaze Hostelry

A towering tavern—the largest in Kugane—favored by local merchants, dockworkers, and foreign visitors alike. Guests can indulge in Far Eastern cuisine made with the freshest seafood while sipping on fine rice wine imported from Koshu, the main island of Hingashi.

C Tenkonto

In the Far Eastern tongue, Tenkonto means aetheryte. Since ancient times in Hingashi, the construction and maintenance of these devices have been the exclusive domain of the Onishishu, a collective of skilled craftsmen who jealously guard their secrets. As a portal into Kugane, the area is kept under strict surveillance by the Sekiseigumi.

D Umineko Teahouse

This humble teahouse owned and operated by Ume Kaujin is a popular spot to enjoy a brief respite while listening to the cat-like wauling of the gulls. Many praise the sweet dango, which comes in an assortment of vivid colors said to symbolize the seasons—pink for spring cherry blossoms, white for wintry snows, and green for fresh summer grass.

E The Statue of Zuiko

Depicted in majestic detail astride his rearing steed is the great warlord Zuiko, revered founder of Suenokuni. While his realm occupies the southern region of Shishu encompassing Kugane, it must be noted that the port city's administration alone falls under bakufu jurisdiction.

F The Rakuza District

By special permission from the bakufu, this commercial district enjoys considerably relaxed trade restrictions. Wares find their way here from the world over, as do visitors of all persuasions, with no shortage of amusements and hostelries to keep them entertained and rested in turn.

G Bokairo Inn

An inn with sweeping ocean views, famed for the healing properties of its hot springs. The public baths of Hingashi are largely mixed gender, and it is customary to bathe naked. But in a trading hub such as Kugane, where folk of myriad cultures and creeds mingle, one is expected to don not one's nameday suit, but a bathing one instead.

H Bokaisen Hot Springs

These natural hot springs were discovered during the initial construction of Kugane. The proprietor claims that there is naught the "mystical" waters cannot cure, be it burns, cuts, or rashes resulting from impropriety.

I Matsuba Gate

Named for the clan of the first Kugane bugyo, whose estate once lay beyond it, this gate leads to a district that is home to various government officials, as well as the formal residence of the current magistrate.

J Matsuba Square

This plaza, just south of the gate which shares its name, was the site of a battle between Sekiseigumi and insurgents plotting to assassinate the Kugane bugyo. Though Kugane's peacekeepers triumphed in the end, many within and without the city were troubled to hear of violence in the streets.

K Sanjo Hanamachi

Those who desire earthly delights need look no further than this pleasure district. Foreign merchants and dignitaries frequently come to Sanjo Hanamachi to partake of the finest foods while enjoying the company of Kugane's preeminent geiko.

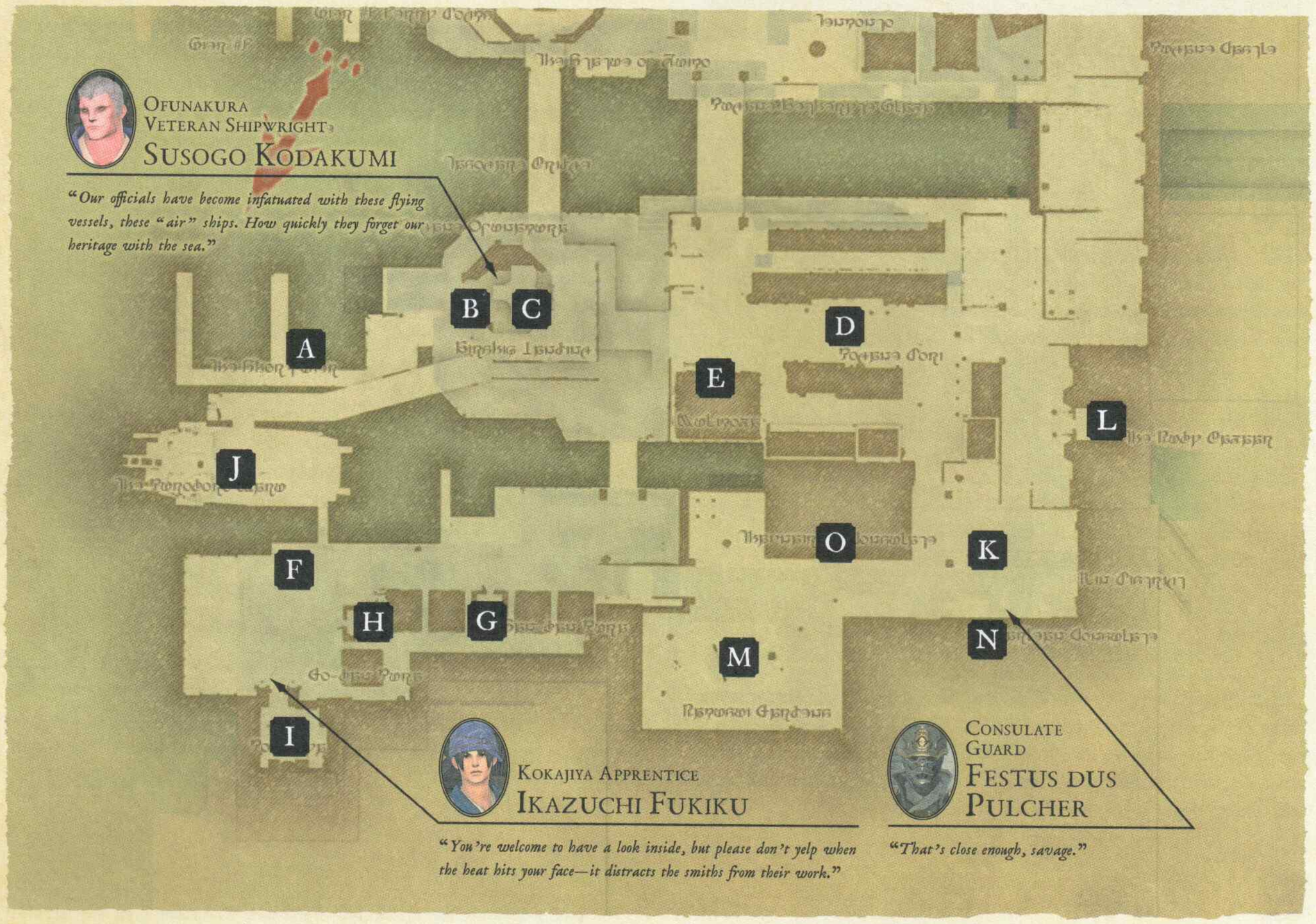
L Sekiseigumi Barracks

An unassuming warehouse serves as a front for the headquarters of Kugane's peacekeeping force. Off-duty Sekiseigumi members are often seen relaxing at the nearby teahouse, and if you tilt your head up, you can take in the unashamedly grandiose main gates of Kugane Castle.

Bokaisen Hot Springs

South Kugane

The southern half of Kugane can be roughly divided into four quarters. The western two are comprised of two prominent piers, whereas the eastern ones feature the mercantile district of Kogane Dori, and the Ijin District home to foreign consulates and trading companies.



Ofunakura Veteran Shipwright
Susogo Kodakumi

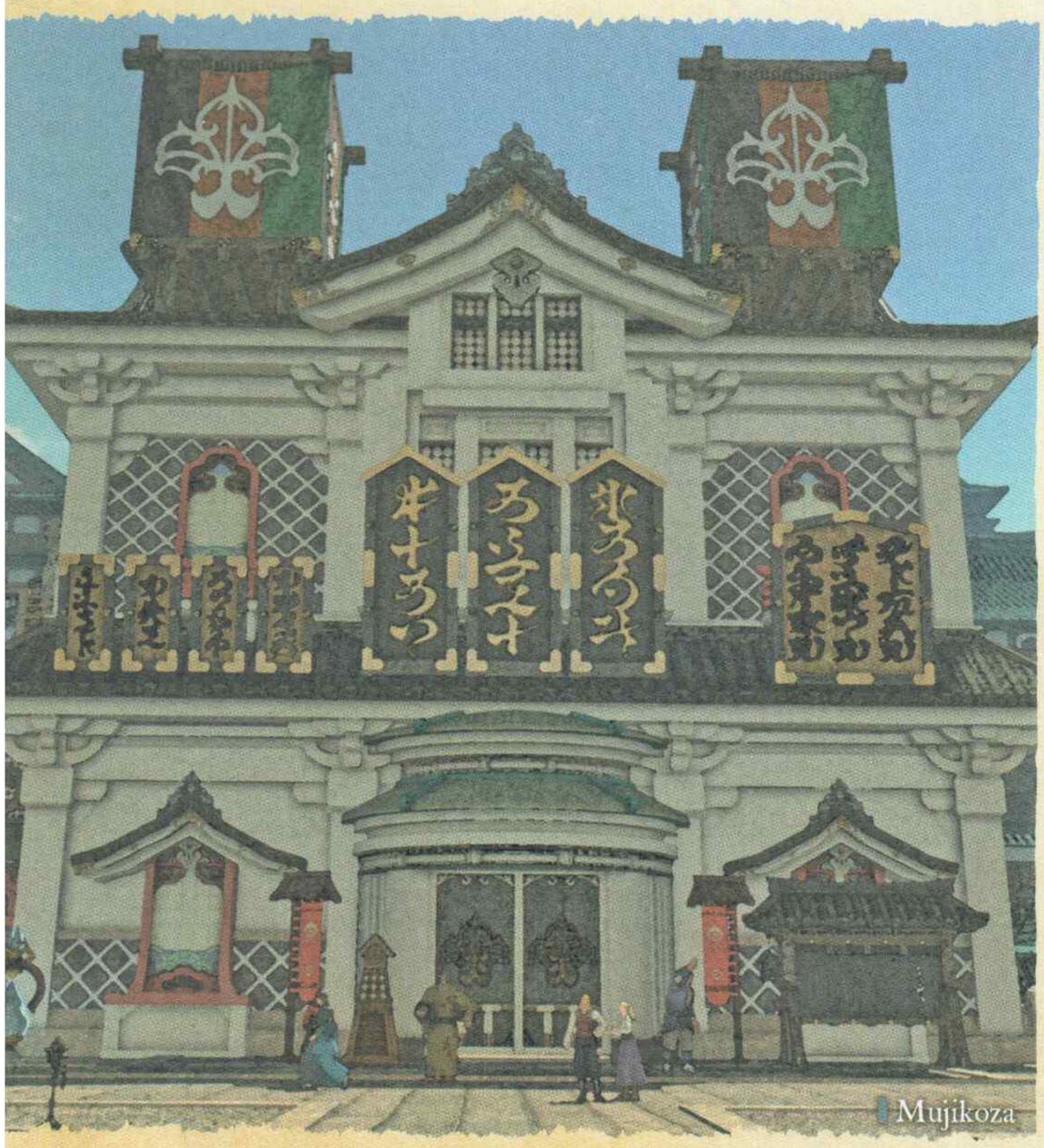
"Our officials have become infatuated with these flying vessels, these "air" ships. How quickly they forget our heritage with the sea."

Kokajiya Apprentice
Ikazuchi Fukiku

"You're welcome to have a look inside, but please don't yelp when the heat hits your face—it distracts the smiths from their work."

Consulate Guard
Festus dus Pulcher

"That's close enough, savage."



Mujikoza

Kugane Ofunakura

The *Kuroboro Maru*

A The Short Pier

This particular pier is reserved for smaller fishing vessels, as well as boats from larger galleons anchored outside the port.

B Kugane Ofunakura

Founded under the auspices of Kugane's lord bugyo, this facility specializes in the construction of smaller craft and the repair of visiting vessels. Accordingly, the shipwrights employed here are versed not only in local shipbuilding traditions, but in foreign techniques as well.

C Airship Landing

Though airships are a rare sight in Hingashi, the bakufu mandated the construction of a landing within Kugane per the terms of a non-aggression pact with the Garlean Empire. One of the few vessels in recent times to make use of the facilities is the *Prima Vista*, an airship home to the Majestic Imperial Theater Company.

D Kogane Dori

Meaning "gold" in ancient Hingan, Kugane is a port where golden fortunes are made, and it is on this bustling street that merchants earn lesser fortunes, or "kogane." From foreign wares to local specialties, there is something to suit every taste. Those who have had their fill of the markets may also find amusement at the renowned Mujikoza theater.

E Mujikoza

This famous center of the arts hosts regular performances by popular entertainers. Its somewhat unusual name—"The Unadorned Drum," as it roughly translates—is said to emphasize the spirit of camaraderie the artists hope to foster amongst the guests they receive.

F Pier #1

The southernmost pier is reserved for the many Hingan vessels that come and go from Kugane. As many of the goods unloaded here are later sold to foreign merchants, there is no shortage of work for local porters and the like.

G San-ban Kura

This is but one of several warehouses near Pier #1 which are owned by the magistrate and rented out for a nominal fee. At present, a rice trader of Shishu is using it for storage.

H Go-ban Kura

Yet another warehouse maintained by the magistrate for merchants. There is a constant demand for more facilities, as every day more and more goods pass through the port of Kugane.

I Kokajiya

Hingan arms and armor are valuable commodities for export, and the talented smiths of this humble forge work tirelessly to produce quality goods. On occasion, they have also been known to assist shipwrights with their repairs.

J The *Kuroboro Maru*

This modest Hingan ship ferries goods and passengers from local port to local port. The captain and his crew are a prideful lot who claim to be capable of navigating the waters of Hingashi no matter the weather or the destination.

K Ijin District

As its name states, this area is reserved for "ijin," or foreigners. Due the presence of several foreign embassies and persons of significant importance, the Sekiseigumi are especially vigilant when patrolling its streets. Hingans without cause to be in the district are strongly encouraged to loiter elsewhere.

L The Ruby Bazaar

The Kugane branch offices of the East Aldenard Trading Company (which are managed by an Ul'dahn gentleman of some repute) are vital to Eorzean interests in the Far East. For this reason, they are kept under constant guard—though rumor has it that this also serves as means to disguise the activities of an Immortal Flames agent.

M Rakusui Gardens

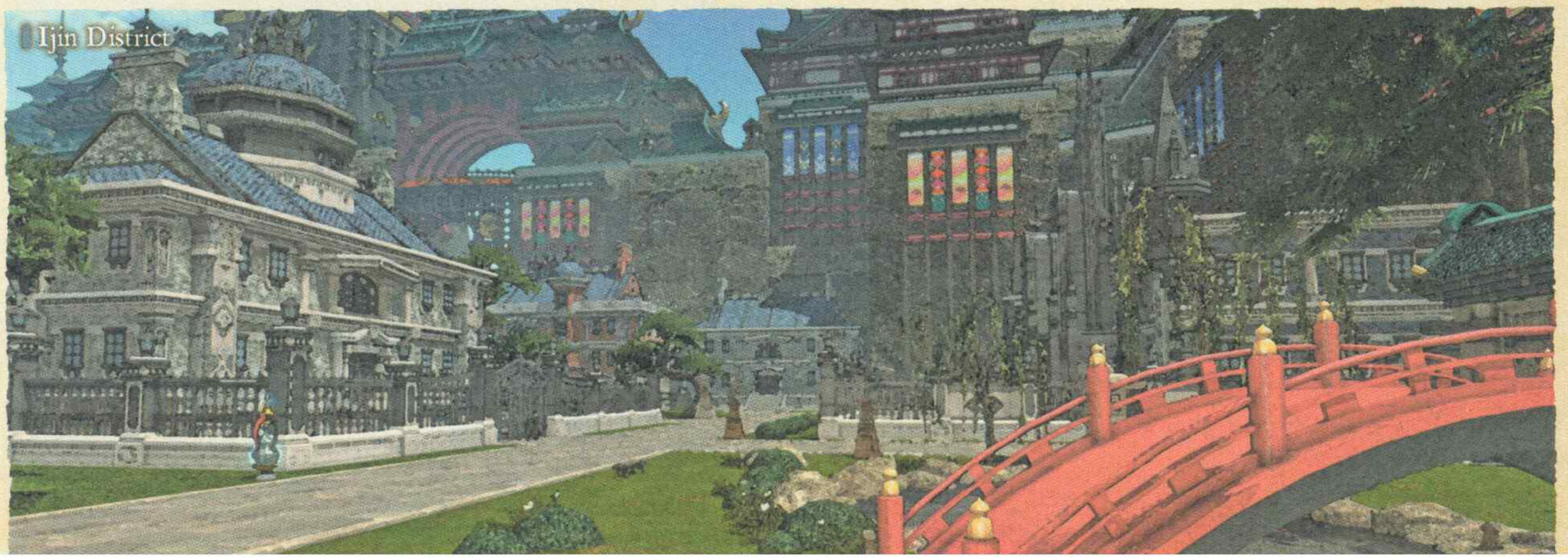
These small but exquisite gardens were created that the ijin of Kugane might better appreciate Hingan aesthetics. The pines and willows are carefully cultivated to provide contrast with the pond and the wooden bridge crossing over its center.

N Garlean Consulate

Built in accordance with the non-aggression pact signed by Garlemald and Hingashi, the consulate plays host not only to imperial diplomats, but to countless spies as well. At the Empire's insistence, the materials used in its construction were all delivered by airship from Ilsabard.

O Thavnairian Consulate

Like many nations, Radz-at-Han has established a presence in Kugane. Unlike other ambassadors, theirs is reputed to be an alchemist of consummate skill who pursues his craft with the same dedication he carries out his formal duties.



The Ruby Sea

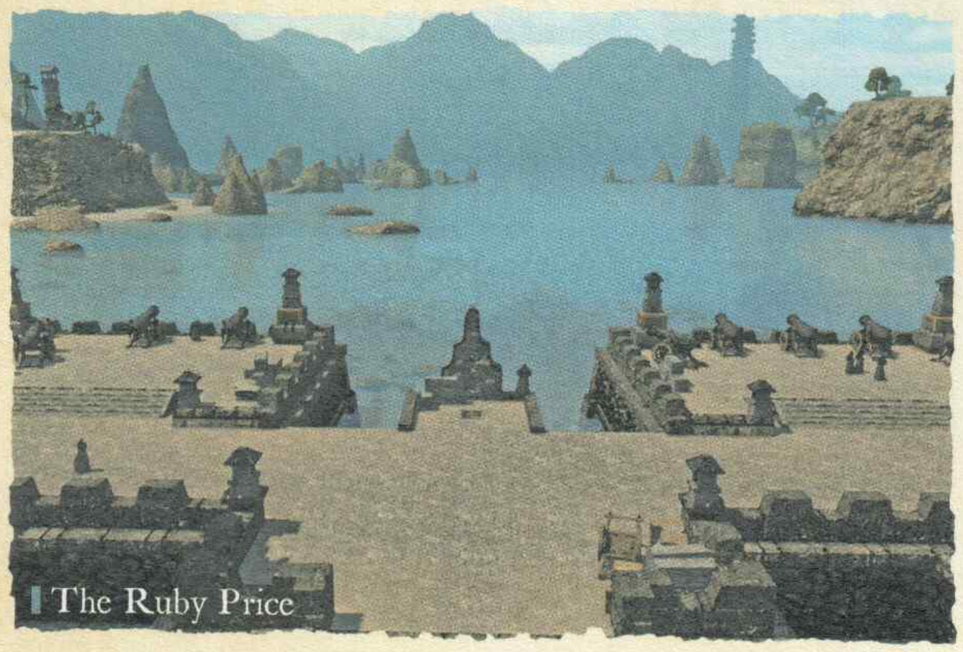
Since antiquity, the pristine waters between Othard and Hingashi have belonged to no nation. Rather, they are considered the domain of the Confederacy and the Kojin, and any who would traverse them must submit to their authority.

Rasen Kaikyo

Roughly translated as "The Winding Straight," this part of the Ruby Sea is known for its treacherous currents. Some say the name is far more apt than outsiders might realize, given the many parties that have a vested interest in the region, and how difficult it can be to avoid running afoul of them all.

The Ruby Price

By order of the bakufu, Suenokuni brought earth and stone from the mainland to construct this fortification atop a natural reef. Arrayed with countless cannons, it serves as a defensive outpost against foreign invaders. Those who maintain it must serve for three years before they are permitted to return home.


The Ruby Price

Barrier Isle

This small island marks the border of Hingashi's territorial claim. Nevertheless, the fishermen of Isari are frequently seen in the surrounding waters. While these incursions are somewhat tolerated, larger foreign vessels sighted in the vicinity of the island may be warned off by cannon fire from the Ruby Price.

Sakazuki

Its name meaning "goblet," this island is said to be the birthplace of the Confederacy, where rival pirates first toasted as brothers and pledged themselves to a common cause. Today it remains an important outpost, constantly garrisoned by sharp-eyed guards who keep watch for vessels that sail the Ruby Sea.

Hells' Lid

Day and night, the volcano on this island spews ash into the air and lava into the sea. By all accounts, it has always been active, hence its name and an ancient tale which tells of oni that once lived beneath its surface, until the legendary hero Tenzen and the Four Lords drove them into the sea.

The Isle of Bekko

Though the isle is within Kojin territory, they themselves consider the name inauspicious, as it refers to the shells of sea tortoises—for which the creatures are hunted. Of course, other peoples harbor no such superstitions, and will use it freely even in the presence of a Kojin.

Onokoro

Legend has it that when the kami first descended from their celestial realm they came to Onokoro, and there built Heaven-on-High. Though the island and the tower are regarded as sacred by some, the Confederates who now call it home do not share their beliefs.

Crick

For the longest time, folk gave these shores a wide berth for fear of the kami, who they believed erected the enigmatic tower known as Heaven-on-High. The pirates of the Confederacy harbored no such fears, however, and one day they claimed the land for their own and established an outpost.

Heaven-on-High

A slender tower of stone stacked to impossible heights, seemingly piercing the very heavens. Aside from a Far Eastern myth that attributes its creation to the kami, little is known about the structure. During a time of war, audacious pirates of the Confederacy made landfall and claimed the spot for their own.

Ten-thousand-year Pine

As the name suggests, it is believed that this tree has lived for more than ten thousand years. Of course, there is no reliable way to ascertain the age of the tree, and all that can be said with certainty is that it is older than anyone can remember.

Quickscape Pier

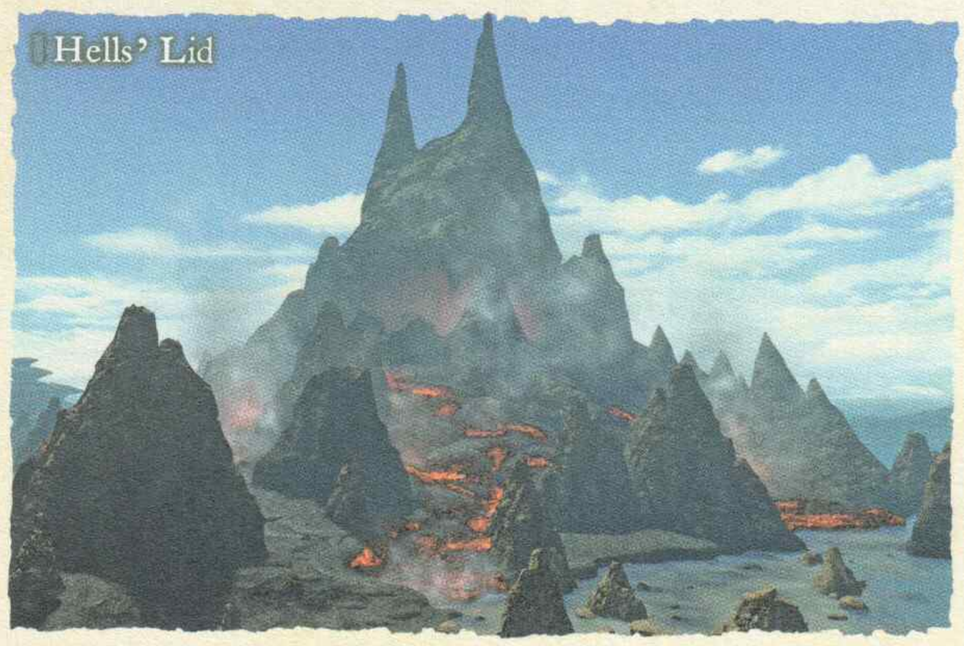
Even the most valiant pirate must be prepared to beat a hasty retreat, and it is for that reason this pier was initially constructed. These days it is mostly used for the inspection and maintenance of Confederate vessels.

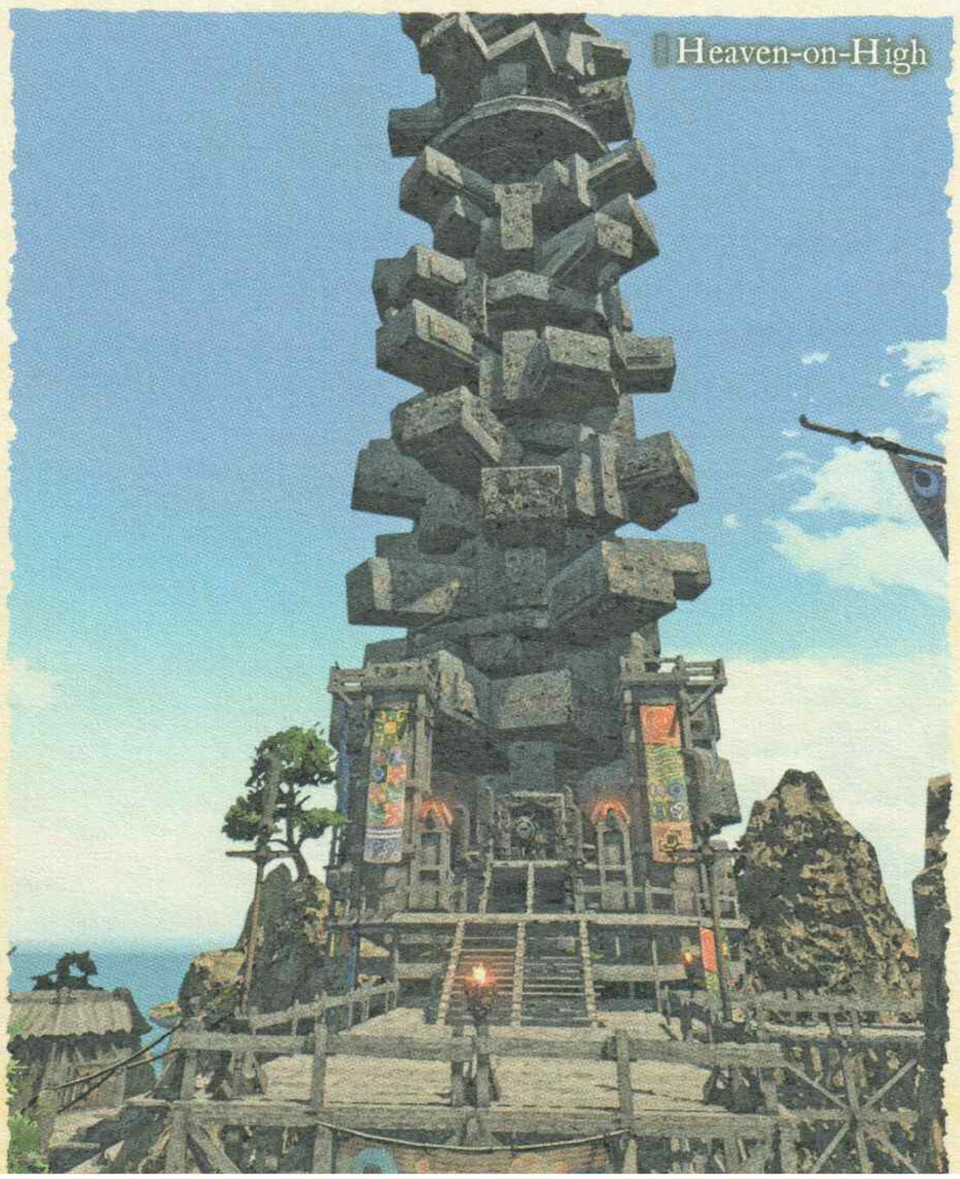
Shoal Rock

One of many isles that pepper the Ruby Sea, hemmed in to the north by an enormous circular formation of coral whereupon the Confederacy established an outpost. According to Hingan historians, the isle was formed of magma that spewed forth from Hells' Lid.

The Coral Banquet

This large wooden platform built atop the reef is primarily utilized as a lookout post. From here, Confederate sentries maintain a constant vigil to ensure that they are not caught unawares by invading forces from the north.


Hells' Lid


Heaven-on-High

Tamamizu

Below the Surface

The Rasen Kaikyo holds many secrets, including the homes of the Kojin and an enclave of the Raen. The sea bed is also littered with the wrecks of countless vessels, including some of particular note.

Tamamizu

An underwater village founded by the peaceful Kojin of the Blue. Though the Kojin are able to survive for long periods without air, they do not possess gills like the Sahagin. So it was that they developed magicks that allowed them to create an immense bubble of air within which to dwell.

Sui-no-Sato

In the distant past, a group of Raen were driven from their homeland by the fires of war, and sought refuge beneath the sea with the aid of the Kojin. Together, they built what would become Sui-no-Sato. For fear of being forced to flee again, however, they make every effort to avoid outside contact, and so little is known about their society.

The *Kobayashi Maru*

This Hingan vessel was caught in a terrible storm which damaged its rudder and set it adrift in the Ruby Sea, until the currents delivered it into Confederate waters. Spying the prize, the pirates sent their ships to demand the Ruby Tithe, and when the captain refused, the *Kobayashi Maru* was summarily sunk.

Saibai Cavern

One of many caves beneath the waters of the Ruby Sea, it is named for its abundance of shellfish which are regularly harvested by the people of Sui-no-Sato.

Exile

Kagami, a Kojin sage, once called this cavern home. Believing her reflection to be another being with her own thoughts and dreams, she quit Tamamizu and resolved to live apart from her doppelganger.

The Anemone Gardens

This vibrant colony of anemones is highly prized by the Kojin, who harvest the plant-like creatures for medicinal purposes.

The *Adventure*

This Lominsan vessel was commissioned by an Ul'dahn merchant who sought to conduct business in Kugane, but never reached his destination. Though the circumstances surrounding the ship's sinking are unclear, a surviving sailor claims that vengeful spirits of the sea were responsible.

East Othard Coastline

Blessed by the bounty of the Ruby Sea, the eastern coastline of Othard has long boasted a flourishing fishing trade, and villages like Isari are a common sight. The region also abounds in natural beauty, as numerous poems throughout the ages will attest.

Isari

A small fishing village situated on the eastern coastline of Othard, its name a reference to its livelihood. For a time the Confederacy had something of a presence here, operating out of a little shack and collecting its Ruby Tithe.

The Isle of Zekki

So named as the home of a fearsome fiend, even the Kojin of the Red, who have long dwelled here, came to know the isle by this moniker. An island in truth in the distant past, it was joined to the mainland by magma over the course of multiple volcanic eruptions.

The Dive

This underwater cave is used by Kojin to gain access to the Isle of Zekki. In recent years, however, the Red have grown more aggressive and belligerent, and so unannounced visitors are not likely to be received warmly.

The Air of the Opulent

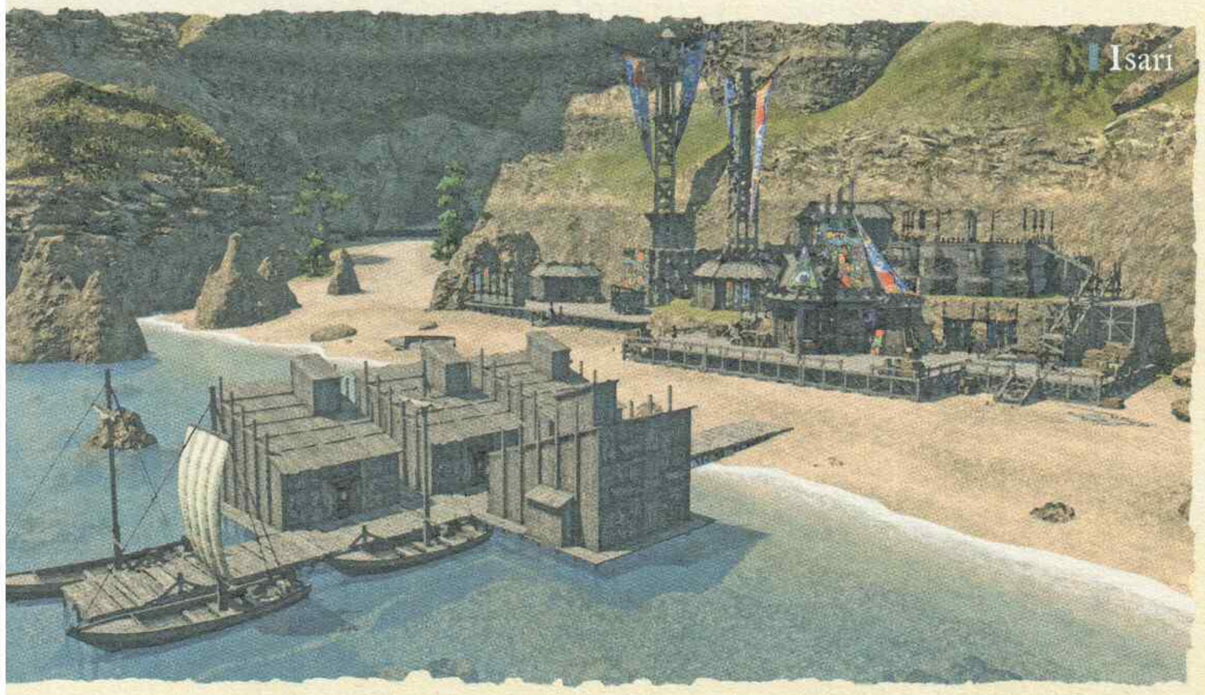
Only the most wealthy and therefore most worthy Kojin of the Red are permitted to live in this corner of the Isle of Zekki.

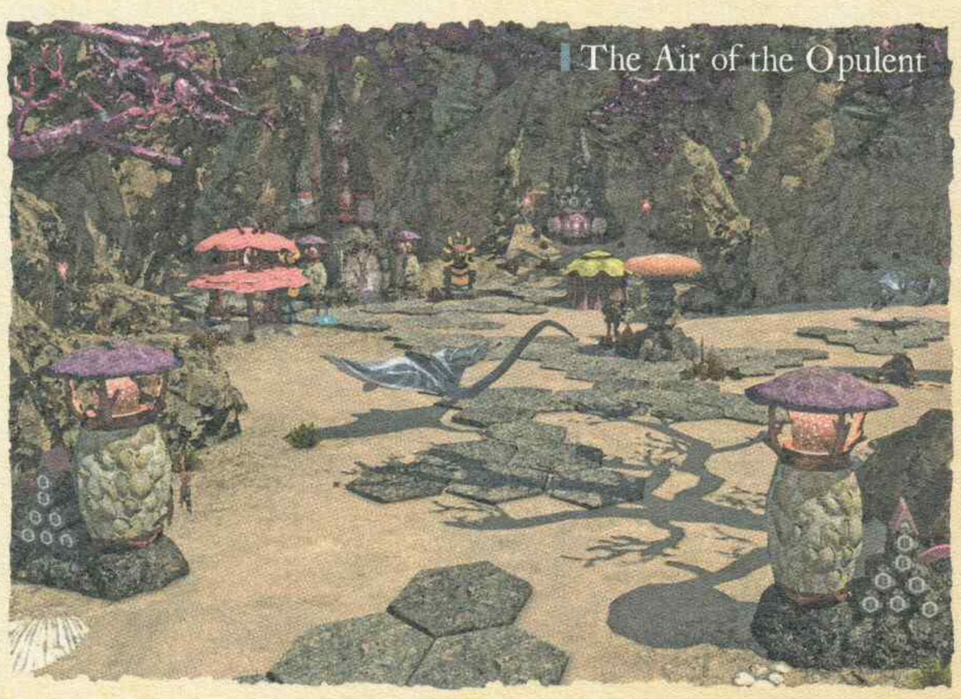
The Turquoise Trench

The depths of the Ruby Sea may seem black and foreboding, but those who venture deep enough will find light in the darkness, provided by numerous resplendent crystals.

Shisui of the Violet Tides

Hidden away at the bottom of the Turquoise Trench, this magnificent palace is home to the Ruby Princess, leader of those Raen who dwell beneath the waves. While its beauty can be appreciated from afar, special permission is required to enter the grounds—a privilege seldom granted.


Isari


The Air of the Opulent

DOMA

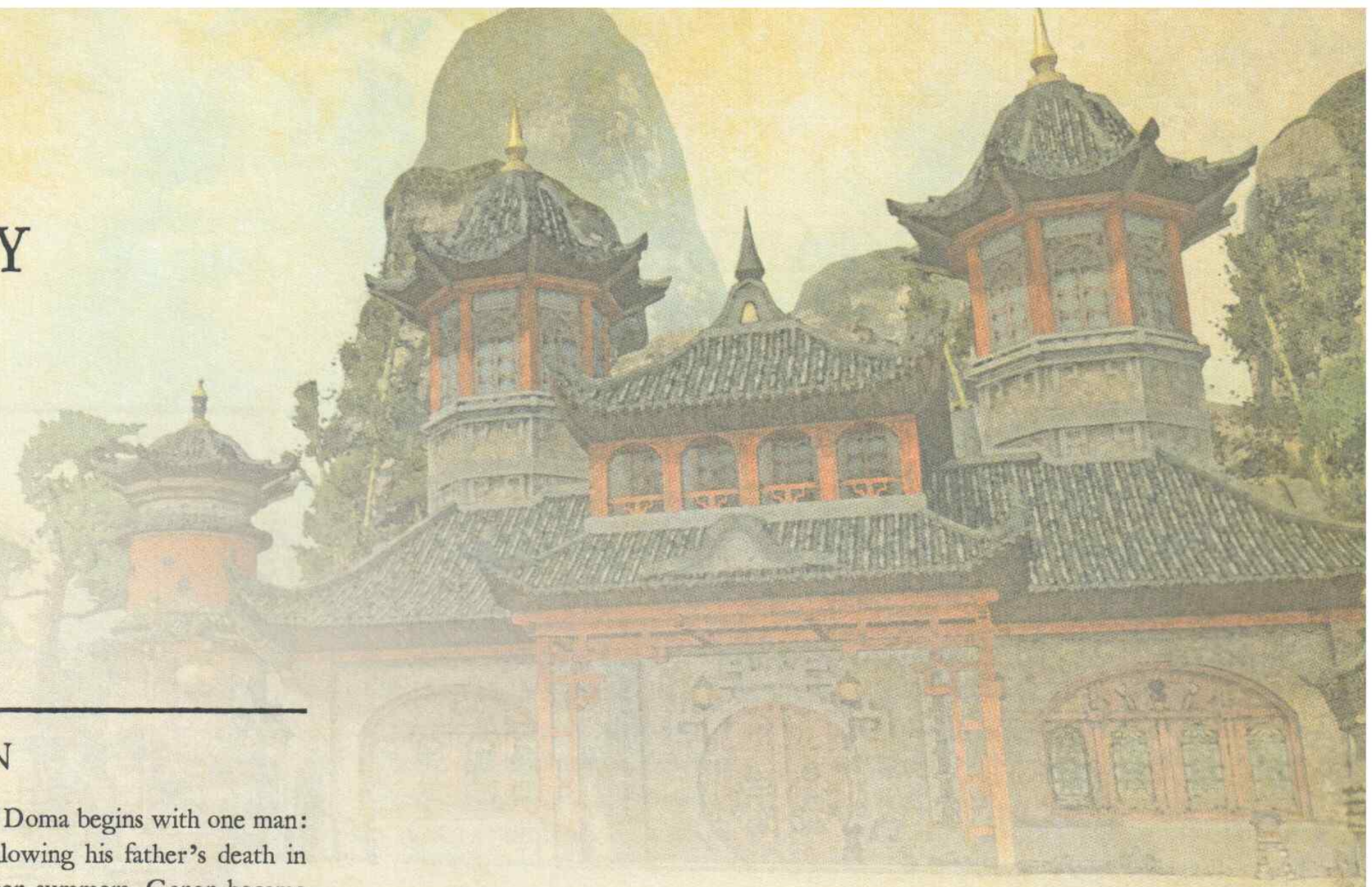
For two and a half decades, this once-grand kingdom on the shores of the One River was subject to Garlean rule. However, with the expulsion of imperial forces, Doma is free once more to control its destiny.

Overview

Flag	The Doman character for the nation's name adorns the center, and the crimson border surrounding it represents the royal family's ancestral role as gatekeepers of the One River. The field upon which it rests is green like the color of the rice plants which grow in Doma's many fields.
Motto	By the Righteous Blade We Are Delivered
Government	Since Doma's founding, the Rijin clan's sons have ruled as kings with the support of an educated samurai caste. During the twenty-five-year Garlean occupation, an imperial viceroy held absolute authority, but the recent liberation has seen the return of the old government, with the leader of the rebellion and head of the Rijin clan restored to the throne.

Leader	Hien Rijin
Ruling Body	Though the king of Doma has the power to intercede in all matters of governance, he delegates much of the minutiae to a cadre of samurai advisors.
Racial Distribution	Far Eastern Hyur: 60% Far Eastern Roegadyn: 20% Au Ra Raen: 10% Other: 10%
Religion	On the whole, Domans tend to practice their faith in private, and do not proselytize nor judge those who do not share in their beliefs. As is the case in many regions of the Far East, they worship a host of spirits referred to as the kami. Though some of these divine beings can be likened to personifications of nature, enlightened sages and long-lived animals of legend may also be defined as kami. Further complicating any attempt to categorize these entities is the variety said to inhabit ancient relics.
Industries	Agriculture: The banks of the One River have long been considered to be some of the most fertile farmland in eastern Othard, particularly the region surrounding the river's mouth in Yanxia. Rice is the crop of choice, though persimmons and plums are also quite profitable. Fishing: Domans have lived off the One River and the Glittering Basin since antiquity. As the kingdom expanded outward, so too did her people, who built villages on the coast of the Ruby Sea and from there ventured farther and farther west. While sources of food are abundant, some of the more adventurous fishermen have made a living hunting sea tortoises for their shells, which are highly valued by all manner of artisans for use in their crafts. Papermaking: The fibers of the Yanxian mulberry and the waters of the One River are key ingredients in the production of Doman paper, which is prized the world over for both its durability and its beauty. Not only is it considered ideal for scrolls and documents that must be preserved, but it is also a medium in which artisans may craft fans, lanterns, and more elaborate displays. Though the industry languished during the imperial occupation, masters of the craft managed to preserve the knowledge of their techniques, and in the wake of Doma's liberation they set about rebuilding the mills and resuming production.
Beliefs	Loyalty is perhaps the most virtuous quality to the people of Yanxia, be it to Doma, her king, or his vassals. The samurai would trust in the Rijin, and the people would in turn trust in the samurai. Many Domans would attest that one need only look to the carnage born of betrayal in the past to see this wisdom in this.
Diet	As one would expect given the amount of farmland devoted to it, rice is part of virtually every Doman meal. Aside from that common element, however, the cuisine of the central and coastal regions can differ to a surprising degree. Pork, fowl, and other meats are favored in the heartland of Doma, whereas seafood is far more common along the coast. The seasonings used in preparation are somewhat dissimilar as well, with the coastal villages preferring the more subtle flavors of Hingashi, while stronger spices imported from Radz-at-Han are regularly incorporated into Yanxian fare.

History



The Feats of Ganen

For all intents and purposes, the history of Doma begins with one man: Ganen Rijin. Eight hundred years ago, following his father's death in battle when he was still but a boy of fourteen summers, Ganen became leader of his clan. Even at that tender age, he immediately understood that the Rijin, a clan of little renown and meager holdings, would be judged easy prey too tempting to ignore, and would soon be attacked by one of the larger and more aggressive clans that were locked in a constant struggle for supremacy. Sure enough, it was not long before his scouts brought word of enemy troops massing near their borders.

While formulating his defensive strategy, Ganen first considered how a small contingent of soldiers might defend a fortified position against a larger force, which then led him to devise a most cunning plan. When the invading clan's cavalry first sighted the Rijin soldiers, they were surprised to find them woefully underequipped—on foot and bereft of chain and plate. They fled, and the eager invaders gave chase, only to become caught in wetlands and weighed down by their armor. At Ganen's command, the trap was sprung, and a hidden host of archers rained arrows down upon the helpless army. Thus began the legend of the boy general who would later found a kingdom.

The Birth of a Kingdom

Many accomplished warlords have left their mark on Yanxia over the centuries, but Ganen had two qualities others lacked. For one, as a child he had learned the art of geomancy from a wise hermit. He could read the elemental energies as well as any practitioner, and use this knowledge to his advantage when deciding on the time and place to engage his enemies.

Ganen's other strength was his disregard for birth and background. Whether farmer, fisherman, or even former bandit, he would accept any recruit into his service so long as he believed them possessed of ability and wisdom. Races such as the Lupin who would be considered lessers by many Eorzeans were man's equals in his eyes, and he welcomed them into his service with open arms. Ganen showed mercy to his defeated enemies, and in so doing earned their respect and loyalty, further bolstering his armies' ranks. With every victory the Rijin grew stronger, and in the span of twenty years they controlled the whole of the One River's eastern bank.

On the western bank, however, other clans observed the Rijin's expansion with growing fear. Led by the Koboku, they assembled a massive army, and it soon became clear that confrontation was unavoidable. For eight years the war 'twixt east and west raged with hardly a day of rest, until General Ganen at last led his armies to victory with the aid of Namazu messengers and spies, who provided invaluable military intelligence. Having united all of Yanxia beneath his banners, he then decreed that the Kingdom of Doma was born.

The Intercession of the Shinobi

For seven centuries, the Rijin clan remained firmly in control of Doma, though their largely uneventful rule was punctuated by occasional periods of unrest. One notable example was the reign of King Seien some three hundred years ago, who even from childhood seemed destined to wreak havoc. He was a brash, impulsive ruler, who hosted extravagant galas day and night to indulge his many vices, with no consideration for the cost. As Doma's coffers ran dry, he turned to merchant clans for financial assistance, and when the time for repayment drew closer, he taxed his subjects to raise capital. Seien was, in every aspect, unfit to lead.

In these troubled times, the kingdom found salvation in an unexpected ally. Sasuke, a shinobi of the Kagekakushi clan who had come to Doma to carry out a secret mission, was moved by the plight of the people. After fulfilling his duties, he sought out Seien's younger brother, Shoen—a far more sensible man whose attempts to restrain the king's appetites had only drawn his ire—and freed him from captivity. Together, the two led a rebel army and overthrew Seien, and in so doing brought an end to a dark chapter of Doman history.

The Garlean Occupation

The newly crowned Shoen implored his friend Sasuke to remain in Doma, but not as a mere retainer. Rather, the king feared what might become of the realm should another like his brother claim the throne, and saw the shinobi as a check against tyranny—defenders loyal to Doma, not her leader. Sasuke shared Shoen's concern and readily agreed to his proposal, and shortly thereafter founded the hidden village of Shinobi-no-Sato deep in the mountains of Yanxia. There he trained others in the arts of ninjutsu, and for nearly three hundred years the Kingdom of Doma enjoyed peace and tranquility.

Alas, such things are not wont to last. During the reign of the forty-third king of Doma, Kaien Rijin, the Garlean Empire invaded Yanxia from the west. After establishing a beachhead on the One River, imperial forces were reinforced by massive airships used to secure floating isles as part of a multi-pronged attack. With the support of the hastily constructed Castrum Fluminis, the Empire was poised to bring the Kingdom of Doma to its knees. At first, Lord Kaien and his vassals were determined to drive the Garleans from their lands, but as the invaders brought their airships and armor to bear and losses mounted, it quickly became clear that the defenders were outmatched. Doma surrendered, and for the next twenty-five years was subject to imperial rule, until a group of rebels finally rose up and cast down their oppressors to reclaim their freedom.

Organizations

The Rijin Clan

Since its birth over seven hundred years ago, the Kingdom of Doma has been ruled by a single clan, which was the first to unite the peoples of Yanxia beneath a single banner. The Rijin are regarded by many as the heart and soul of Doma—leaders deserving of unconditional loyalty, who in return are expected to act as staunch defenders of Doma, as Lord Kaien did when he and his samurai fought valiantly to repel the imperial invaders.

Recognizing the influence the Rijin wielded, Garlemald named the deposed monarch deputy viceroy in the fourth year of the occupation, in the hopes that his appointment might make the populace more amenable to their rule. However, while Kaien played the part of collaborator, he continued to work in secret to coordinate the Liberation Front's activities, until two decades later when he finally gave the command to put their plans in motion.

The rebels were strong and well-prepared—so much so that they managed to reclaim Doma Castle and drive the bulk of imperial forces out of Yanxia for a time. Unfortunately, they did not foresee that the imperial war of succession would end so quickly, allowing Zenos yae Galvus to lead his XIIth Legion to Doma and reassert control. With the death of Lord Kaien and the disappearance of his son Hien, the rebellion was crushed, and the Rijin line extinguished...or so it was believed. In truth, the heir to the throne had fled to the Azim Steppe, where he was nursed back to health by a Xaela tribe. There he remained, until found by the Scions of the Seventh Dawn, with whose considerable aid Hien managed to return to Doma and overthrow the imperial viceroy, Yotsuyu goe Brutus, freeing his people from the yoke of imperial oppression once and for all.

Hien Rijin

"Stone walls do not a nation make. Her people do. And as long as we yet live, we can rebuild."

Born to his mother Mina shortly after Doma fell to Garlemald, Hien knew nothing of life before the occupation. Though he was subjected to the official imperial curriculum, he was also permitted to study Doman arts and culture, and from this diverse education he developed an appreciation for both traditional values and modern philosophies. Until his mother passed away following an illness some fifteen years ago, little "Shun" enjoyed a relatively happy life with his father's retainer, Gosetsu. Following her death, he devoted himself to the pursuit of Doma's liberation and reconstruction.

That said, the young lord still finds time to sup on raw meats and enjoy spirits with his comrades, who never fail to enjoy his good company.

Royal Retainers

Although the samurai elite who maintain order garner the most attention, there are many other retainers with rather less martial prowess who counsel the Rijin on administrative matters. In the past, these advisors lived in Monzen near the castle, but as both now lie in ruins, they now reside in makeshift homes in the Doman Enclave.

Gosetsu Daito

"The kami are not finished with you yet."

This grizzled warrior who entered into Kaien's service in his youth was not only his right hand in public, but a dear friend and confidante to the king in private. Tragically, in the carnage that was the Garlean invasion twenty-five years ago, he lost his wife and daughter. Imprisoned as an insurgent afterwards, he was prepared to embrace death, until he was sought out and entrusted with the safety of Kaien's unborn child, Hien.

Given new purpose, Gosetsu resolved to earn his freedom, and did so by fighting for Garlemald as a mercenary for several years. Though his feats in battle earned him a fearsome reputation that has endured to this day, Gosetsu speaks little of those dark days. As a warrior who has known terrible loss, who fate ever conspired to see thrust to the front lines of war, he was glad to put up his sword once and for all...though his respite only came after one final tragedy.

Hakuro Gunji

"Duty comes before all."

Known also as the White, Hakuro is the thirty-three-year-old lord of the Gunji clan, retainers to the royal house of Rijin. When Doma fell, as the heir to an influential Lupin faction, he was made a ward of the Empire, whereupon he was given an imperial education and conscribed into its army. Yet despite being but a pup of eight summers when he was taken, he knew full well he was little more than a hostage. In order to protect his own, he maintained the veneer of obedience and bided his time, ever honing his deadly Howling swordfighting style.

The turning point came when he and his unit, the Ferae Domitae, were deployed to defend Ala Mhigo. There, his path would cross with Alphinaud and the Warrior of Light, who convinced him to defect to the Eorzean cause. Following the city-state's liberation, he returned home to Doma to take his rightful place beside his lord.

When not fulfilling his duty as personal guard, Hakuro can be found amidst the Enclave's sparring dummies, training a new generation of fighters—the Lupin's only true respite proving an occasional round of mahjong with his old friend and rival Otoya.

Shinobi-no-Sato

Hidden deep in the mountains of Yanxia, this village was founded by Sasuke of the Kagekakushi clan that he might train others in the arts of ninjutsu. The Doman shinobi were conceived as an independent organization that would defend the realm from her enemies—even if said enemy was the reigning king of Yanxia. Because of this unique position, the shinobi were divided as to their role in Kaien's rebellion. While many fought and died for Doma's freedom, there were others who opposed the Liberation Front for fear of the people's suffering.

Yugiri Mistwalker

"Every day, I pray for my home, and for the people I left behind. That they might be spared the wages of war, and live in peace, untouched by this madness."

Like many born in the hidden underwater sanctuary of Sui-no-Sato, Yugiri was curious about the outside world, and as a child she and a friend journeyed to the surface to spy upon a coastal fishing village. Though her friend grew fearful and returned home alone, the bold Yugiri ventured further inland and met a boy not much younger than herself, who shared with her tales of Doma and imperial oppression. Afraid of what might become of her own home, she returned to her parents and urged them to do something to help the boy and his people, but neither they nor any of the other adults would listen. In spite of this, Yugiri never forgot the boy's words, and when she was old enough, she left Sui-no-Sato to study the art of ninjutsu. Alas, by doing so, she defied the will of her elders and was forever barred from her home.

Years later, in a curious twist of fate, when she answered the Liberation Front's call for assistance, she was greeted by none other than the boy, now a man grown, she had met so many years ago: Hien Rijin.

Shazenkai

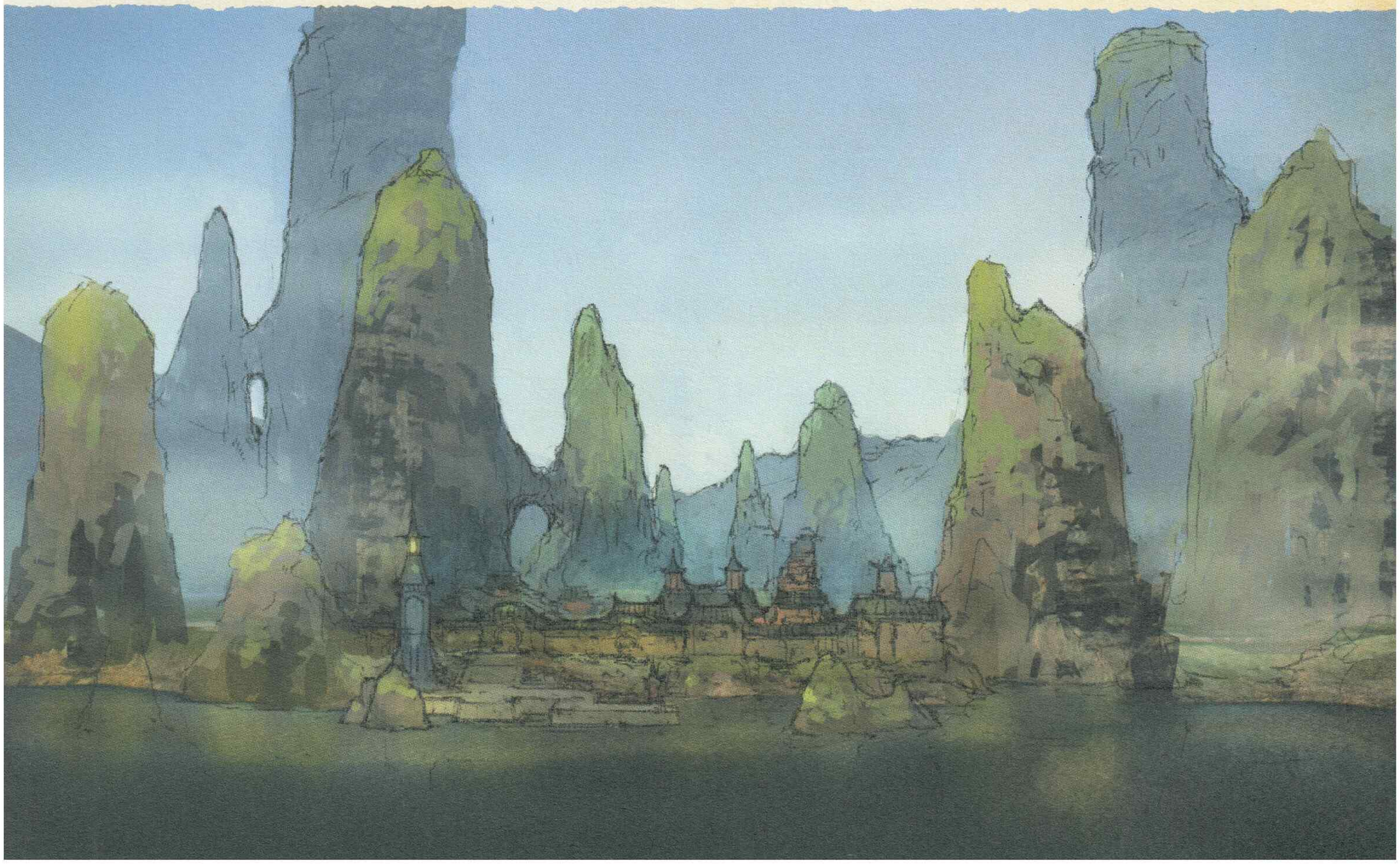
This modest group of motivated citizens labors tirelessly to facilitate the reconstruction of the Doman Enclave. Named for the shazenso—a hardy herb that can endure even the harshest conditions—the Shazenkai strives to rebuild the nation's crippled industry and support the craftsmen and artisans of Yanxia. Shazenkai founder, Kozakura, is often seen poring over documents late into the night, for their work is never finished.

Kozakura Gyoji

"The Doma in our memories and in our hearts will soon be ours again. Until that blessed day, let us never give up hope!"

A driven and dedicated young woman of twenty-five summers, Kozakura's personal motto is to take one step at a time, one day at a time. It was this sensible attitude which saw her catch the eye of one of Lord Hien's advisors, who then tasked her with taking stock of the enclave and compiling information on the people's wants and needs. Over time, she became more involved in everyone's affairs and grew confident in voicing her opinion, and soon—though she was vehemently opposed to the idea at first—she found herself in charge of the newly formed Shazenkai. Like Kozakura, many of the members are rather young but eager to rebuild their homeland, though few are as committed to the cause as she is.

When not occupied with Shazenkai business, Kozakura indulges in her hobby of folding paper into various artistic designs. She has also been seen fiddling with materia, though her furrowed brow suggests she has yet to wrap her head around its usage.



The Doman Enclave

Even during the occupation, this settlement on the bank of the One River was considered a thriving center of culture and commerce. Alas, much of the enclave was razed to the ground as punishment for Lord Kaien's failed rebellion. The Shazenkai now works to restore it to its former glory.

Enclave Potwatch
Mitsuba Tabito

"Everyone's busy building the Yard now, eh? Well, we'll do our part to feed the workers and send them on their way!"

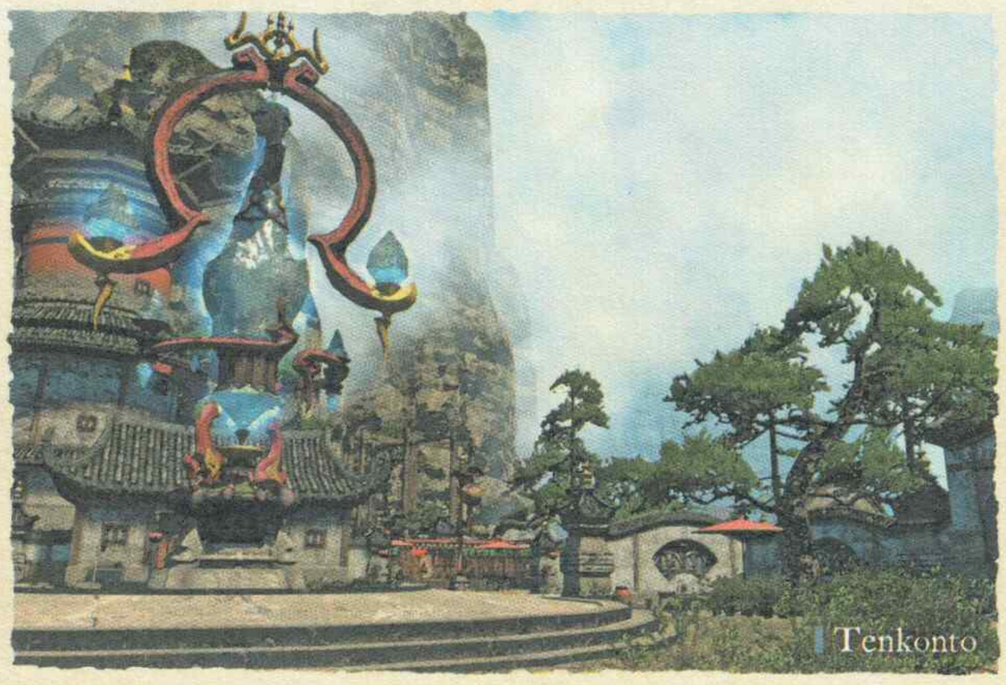
Enclave Papermaker
Araragi Kanya

"If Rowena is indeed as ruthless a merchant as our returned comrades say, then we shall endeavor to give her no reason to question our craftsmanship."

Enclave Blacksmith
Tsuranuki Kaneuchi

"Far, far too long has it been since we saw off Hozan and the others. Yet more people means more hands in need of tools! We must redouble our efforts!"

Kienkan


Tenkonto

Shazenkai

The Yard

A Kienkan

The manor Lord Hien has claimed as his own once served as the residence of the enclave's magistrate prior to the occupation, and an imperial guardhouse during it. So overjoyed were the people by their lord's miraculous return that they bestowed upon the manor a new name meaning "The Swallow's Homecoming."

B Tenkonto

Though disabled during the occupation, the Onishishu have since restored the enclave's aetheryte to good working order at Lord Hien's request. When offered payment for their services, the collective refused and stated they were simply happy to do their part to help Doma rebuild.

C Shazenkai

The center of the reconstruction effort, the Shazenkai receives the petitions of local citizens and formulates plans for addressing their needs. They also accept donations from generous souls who wish to contribute to their cause.

D The Ten Thousand Stalls

This collection of stalls selling all manner of foodstuffs is the result of the Shazenkai's first initiative: to improve the quality of life for the people of the enclave that they might be more motivated to tackle more difficult tasks, and to feed refugees who have yet to get back on their feet.

E The Yard

Rather than commit solely to the construction of facilities for crafters of practical tools or artists who fashion works for export, the Shazenkai set about creating a district that would fulfill both these needs. In one end, carpenters and smiths work closely to fashion tools and prepare materials for various purposes, while in the other papermakers produce what may be one of Doma's most prized commodities.

F The Enclave Barracks

Released from imperial service and returned home, many former Doman conscripts have found new purpose in patrolling the streets and keeping the peace in the enclave.

G The Watchtower

Built in place of a former Garlean structure which once stood near the docks, this tower provides a vantage point from which Doma's defenders can watch over the One River, and ensure that none attempt to bypass their fortifications via an underwater route, as recently did a contingent of Red Kojin.

H Rissai-juku

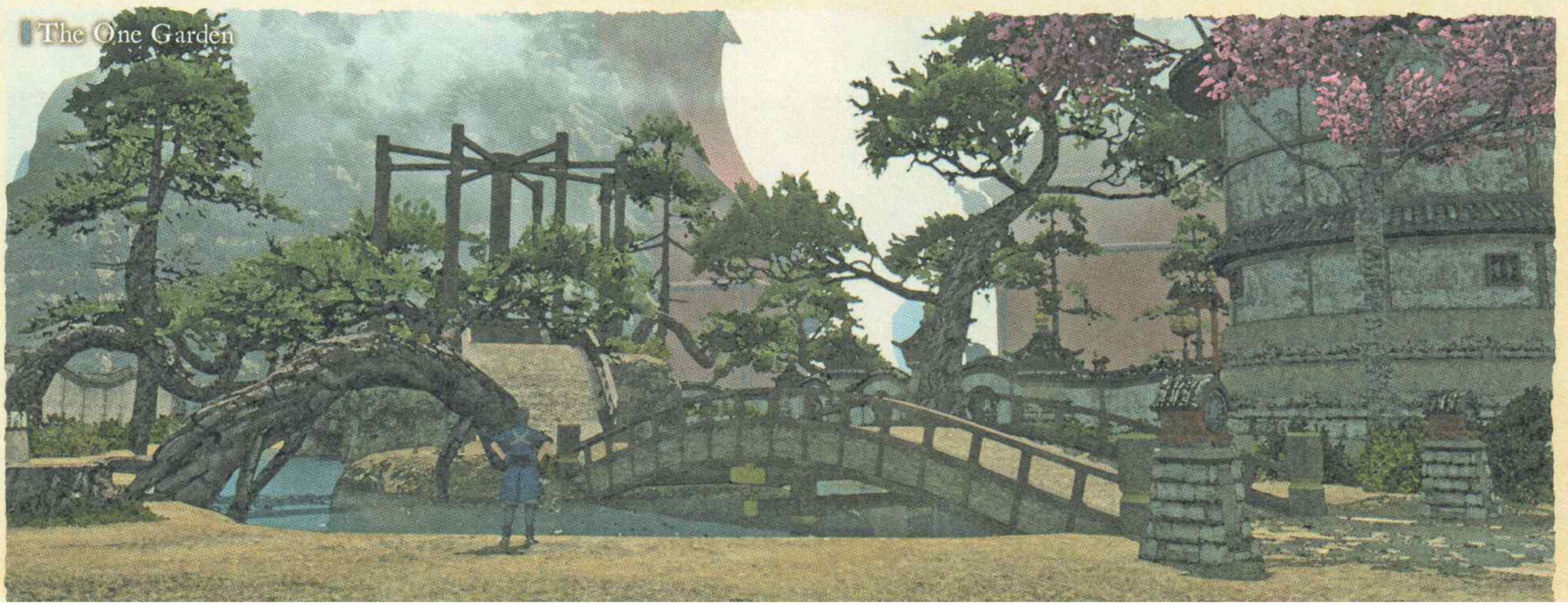
Though he had a reputation as a samurai of surpassing skill with blades and firearms alike, the eponymous founder also possessed extensive knowledge in a number of subjects owing to his love of books. After decades of faithful service to the Rijin, he left his post and opened a school with his own funds. Now that it has been rebuilt, he can once more devote his energies to educating the children of the enclave.

I The Enclave Demesne

These tracts of land were made available to farmers whose fields were despoiled by imperial armies. Though some have been designated for rice cultivation, others are planned to host other crops.

J The One Garden

A fusion of Hingan aesthetics and Doman horticulture, these grounds fed by the One River provide welcome respite for weary residents of the enclave.



The One Garden

Yanxia

The defining feature of this area within central Othard is the One River, and since antiquity, the people of the plains have built settlements along its fertile shores. So prized were these lands that ancient clans were locked in a constant struggle to control them.

The Gensui Chain

The undulating hills of the eastern shore are especially suited to rice cultivation, hence the proliferation of terraces. Its name is derived from an old Doman word for alcohol, as the spirits fermented and distilled from rice grown here have a reputation for surpassing quality. In a contrast to some other farming communities, locals have a custom of eating three meals a day rather than two, and take pride in this excess as proof of their abundance.

The Drunken Toad

A hovel home to Sentei Suishu and his wife Kohagi, the Toad was built with materials scavenged from a riverboat which once carried rice and spirits for a local lord. For a time, the vessel was also used to ferry passengers through Garlean checkpoints, as well as for fishing. However, Sentei chose to honor its original purpose by retaining its name, even if it no longer traverses the waters of the One River.

Unseen Spirits Laughing

Travelers are advised to proceed with caution when visiting this corner of Yanxia littered with boulders and rocks, as it is often shrouded in mist, and a careless step could send one tumbling. The name is taken from a Doman proverb often used in reference to games of chance, in which one is cautioned to think before they act, lest the kami delight in their misfortune.

The Heron's Flight

This small waterfall which flows into the Heron's Way is vital for the irrigation of terraces as well as rice wine production. As the name suggests, herons can be seen in abundance nearby.

Namai

A village situated amidst the mountains of the Gensui Chain, named with the local word for the aquatic arrowhead plant, an allusion to its long history in rice farming. The arrival of the Empire placed this lifestyle under siege, but through perseverance the villagers continue to hold on to their ways.

Plum Spring

High in the mountains to the east of Namai, this spring was named for its most striking feature, the many plum trees which can be found growing throughout. A local legend tells of a wizened sage who resides there, but those few who claim to have seen him are rarely believed.

Yuzuka Manor

The Glittering Basin

As the One River winds its way towards the Ruby Sea, it delivers silt rich in nutrients to the lands along its shores. Much is deposited on the islands of the Glittering Basin, as well as the shoals which join them to the banks. Various settlements dot the lands, as well as wreckage from some of the most intense battles fought during the rebellion of yesteryear.

Kusakari

Named for the clan which founded it, Kusakari was a village razed to the ground during the Garlean occupation. Though ostensibly still abandoned, refugees have been known to take shelter in the remaining structures, albeit secretly.

Eastern Ryurin Bridge

One of two bridges which once connected the islands of the Glittering Basin, it takes its name from a legend in which Seiryu, one of the Four Lords, shed several scales above Yanxia, and from them all manner of plants and animals arose.

Western Ryurin Bridge

A bridge which joined the central isle of the Glittering Basin to the western one, upon which Yuzuka Manor can be found. Destroyed during the occupation, it has yet to be rebuilt, as the bulk of Doma's resources are currently devoted to the reconstruction of the enclave.

Castrum Fluminis

Established twenty-five years ago as an advance post for the invasion of Doma, the castrum served for a time afterwards as an administrative center for the imperial occupation. As repairs on Doma Castle progressed, its occupants relocated to the city, abandoning it to nature.

Yuzuka Manor

For generations, the lords of the Yuzuka clan faithfully served the Doman monarchy as governors of One River settlements, and this was their dwelling. Razed during the rebellion, it has since seen a clan of Namazu take up residence.

The Swallow's Compass

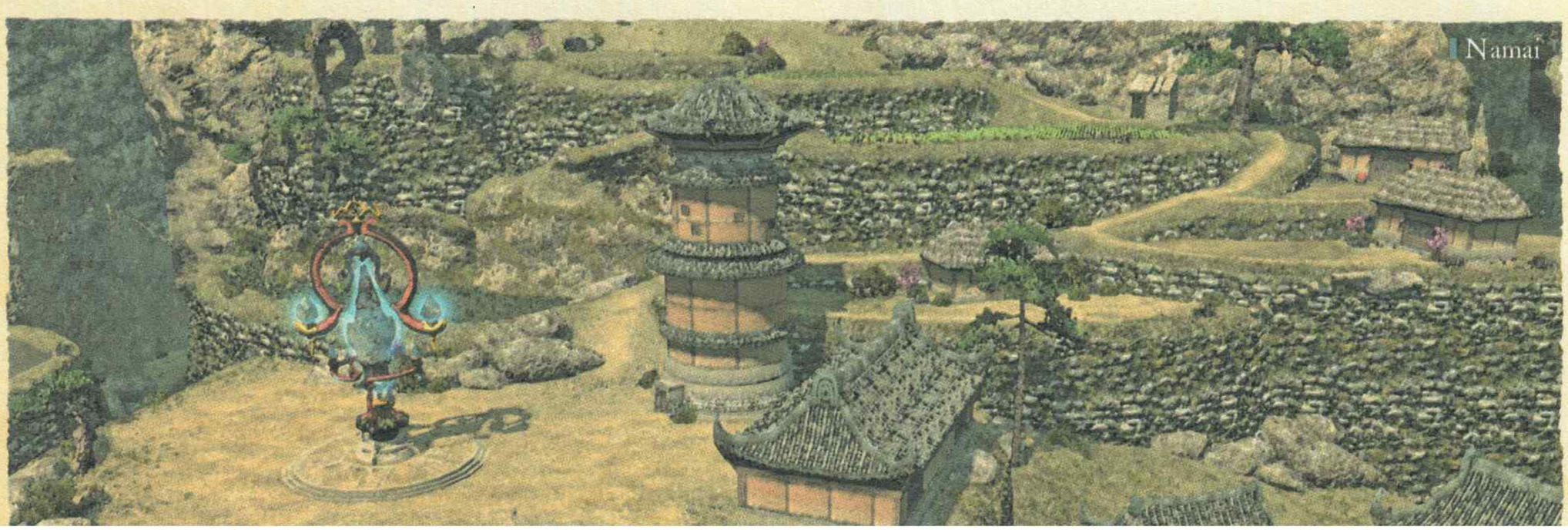
Enshrined within this tomb, his likeness carved on an imposing scale into the cliffside, is Ganen, the great general who united the warring clans of Yanxia to arise as the first king of Doma. A skilled swordsman and mage both, he is credited as the founding father of Doman geomancy.

The Dairyu Moon Gates

Built into natural rock with openings fashioned in the shape of a full moon, this series of colossal portals regulates traffic upon the One River. The Empire, desiring to exert greater control, further added magitek field generators.

Imperial Hypersonic Assault Craft L-XXIII

The letters emblazoned upon its rusted fuselage mark it as the 23rd craft of the XIIth Imperial Legion. Dispatched to Doma in a bid to suppress the rebellion, witnesses say it was brought down by the vulpine guardian of Yanxia, to sink to its watery grave at the bottom of the One River.



Namai

Prism Lake

Valley of the Fallen Rainbow

The abundance of aether in this northern valley of Yanxia has likely facilitated the formation of the crystalline structures which can be found throughout, as well as influenced the development of flora and fauna—some of which has no compunctions in attacking weary travelers.

The House of the Fierce

Once serving as a spiritual retreat for those seeking to escape the mundane concerns of the material world, then as safe haven for refugees and those fleeing imperial pursuers, these caves would become the headquarters of the Doman Liberation Front. A secret underwater passage affords access to eastern Yanxia via a lake near Namai.

Prism Lake

An enigmatic lake carved out in steps, whose waters have taken on the colors of the rainbow. Scholars attribute its beautiful coloration to the rich and exposed deposits of high-purity crystals in the area, while legend tells of an angelic being who fashioned a bridge of rainbow for her mortal lover.

The Ribbons

In a meditation on serenity, a famed Doman poet once described the view from beneath this willow tree as "golden ribbons in twilight."

The House of the Fierce

Monzen

Doma

More accurately described as the area once considered the heart of the kingdom, this region includes both the castle and the ruined settlement of Monzen, which was razed by warmachina on the orders of then viceroy Yotsuyu goe Brutus.

Doma Castle

The seat of power in the nation of Doma, whose dominion encompassed the entirety of Yanxia. The crag-top site was chosen in order to control the One River, an artery of trade and transport and a vital source of water in the region. Under imperial rule, it was made into a viceroyalty and its military capabilities were greatly expanded.

The Coattails

Centuries ago, during a famine brought on by a prolonged drought, a farmer came to entreat the lord of Doma that he might help his people, but was turned away at the castle gates. Undeterred, he sat upon the bridge, unmoving, until the king ventured outside on official business. As he passed, the farmer caught hold of his coattails—a brazen act punishable by death. However, the king was moved by the man's heartfelt pleas, and not only spared his life, but opened the castle's stores of rice to feed the starving smallfolk. In that farmer's honor, the bridge was given its name to remind others to be brave and not fear reprisal if they believe their cause is just.

Monzen

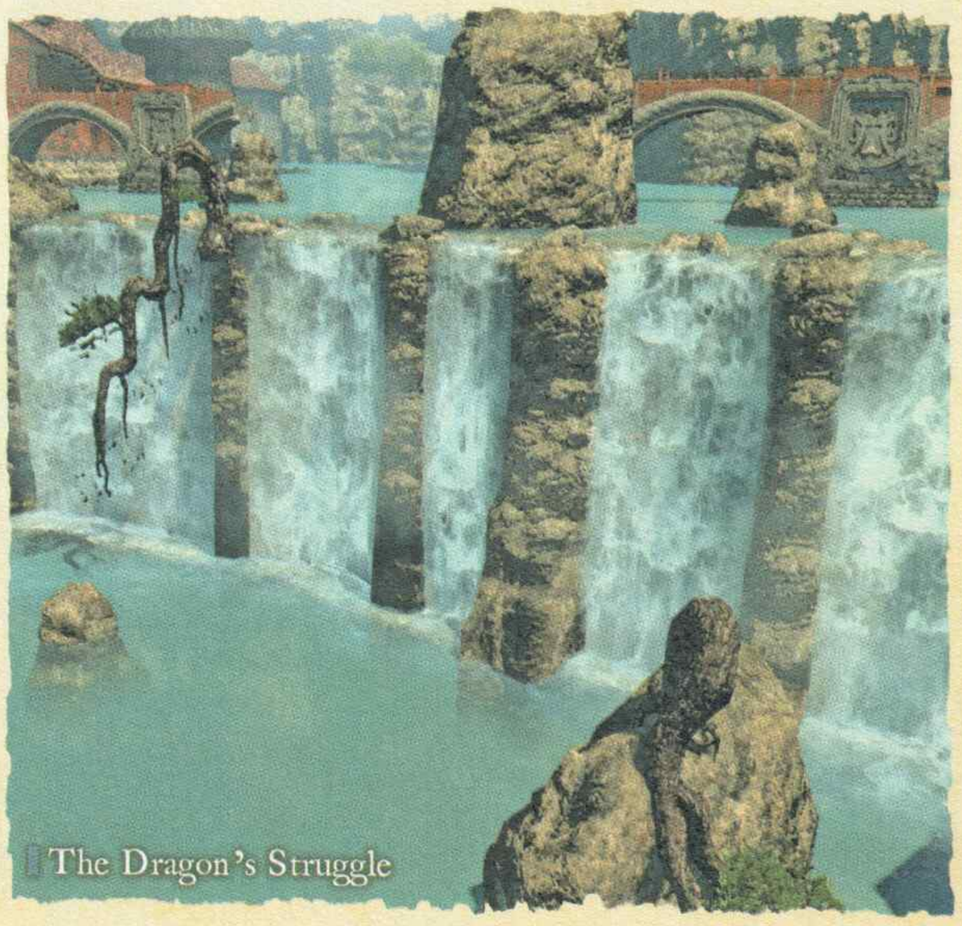
Once home to the samurai elite who served the Rijin, Yotsuyu goe Brutus decreed that Monzen would be razed to the ground as an example not only to the people of Doma but those in other provinces.

Mercantile Docks

After Monzen was destroyed following the failed uprising of yesteryear, the docks to its south fell into disrepair, as there are no nearby settlements which may benefit from their use.

The Dragon's Struggle

According to legend, this great cataract was created by Seiryu of the Four Lords, who in his many visits to Yanxia drank deep of the One River, and in so doing reshaped its course.


The Dragon's Struggle

The Azim Steppe

The vast plains of northern Othard are home to countless tribes of nomadic Xaela. Despite conquering their neighbors to the south, the Garlean Empire has yet to demonstrate any interest in subjugating the Steppe.

The Sea of Blades

Some posit that this part of the Steppe was named for its rolling fields of grass. Others claim that the name is in reference to the countless battles fought between tribes over lands prized for grazing.

Reunion

Once a united people, the Xaela were divided into over fifty disparate tribes, but by gathering here they may be as one again. Such was the hope of the Qestir when they founded this hub of trade. Nowadays, in addition to all the peoples of the Steppe, merchants from foreign lands may be seen here as well.

Ragill's Reckoning

Long ago, Ragill of the Qestir believed that the best way to protect Reunion was with a great stone wall. However, well before work on the wall could be completed, the market was attacked, and many lives were lost. In response, the Qestir revised their plans and set about constructing a more modest wall that encompassed a smaller area and took advantage of Reunion's natural defenses.

Kahkol Iloh

Shortly after this settlement of the Kahkol was destroyed by the Buduga, the weakened tribe suffered further hardship when its remaining population was decimated by disease. Ironically, some of the scattered survivors are said to be living among the Buduga.

Mol Iloh

The current home of the Mol, one of the many Xaela tribes that roam the Azim Steppe. Being nomads, their stay here is but temporary, and the turn of the seasons will see them strike camp in search of greener pastures for their livestock. Though quite sturdy when erected, the yurts are designed for ease of relocation.

The Wound

At the base of this deep canyon is one of many rivers which flow into the One River. Xaela legend tells that the great rift was formed long, long ago, before the first Au Ra was created, by the chaos brought about by a terrible battle between the Dawn Father and the Dusk Mother.

The Path of the Craven

This bridge which once extended across the Wound has yet to be restored since it fell into disrepair and collapsed. Before, it served as a simple test for would-be warriors of the Steppe, who must be brave enough to tame and ride a yol. Those who crossed without trouble were deemed worthy, whereas those who hesitated or turned back were found wanting.

Azim Khaat

Travelers to the Steppe soon learn that many khaal, or rivers, flow to the great khaat—lake—at its center beneath the Dawn Throne, which was also named for the sun deity.

The Dawn Throne

A grand monument marking the sacred site where Azim, god of the sun, is said to have created a corporeal form of himself and become the Dawn Father. Tended and improved over the years by the Steppe's most powerful tribes, it now rests upon the waters of Azim Khaat and is crowned by a magnificent palace.

The Bridge of the High Rule Warriors

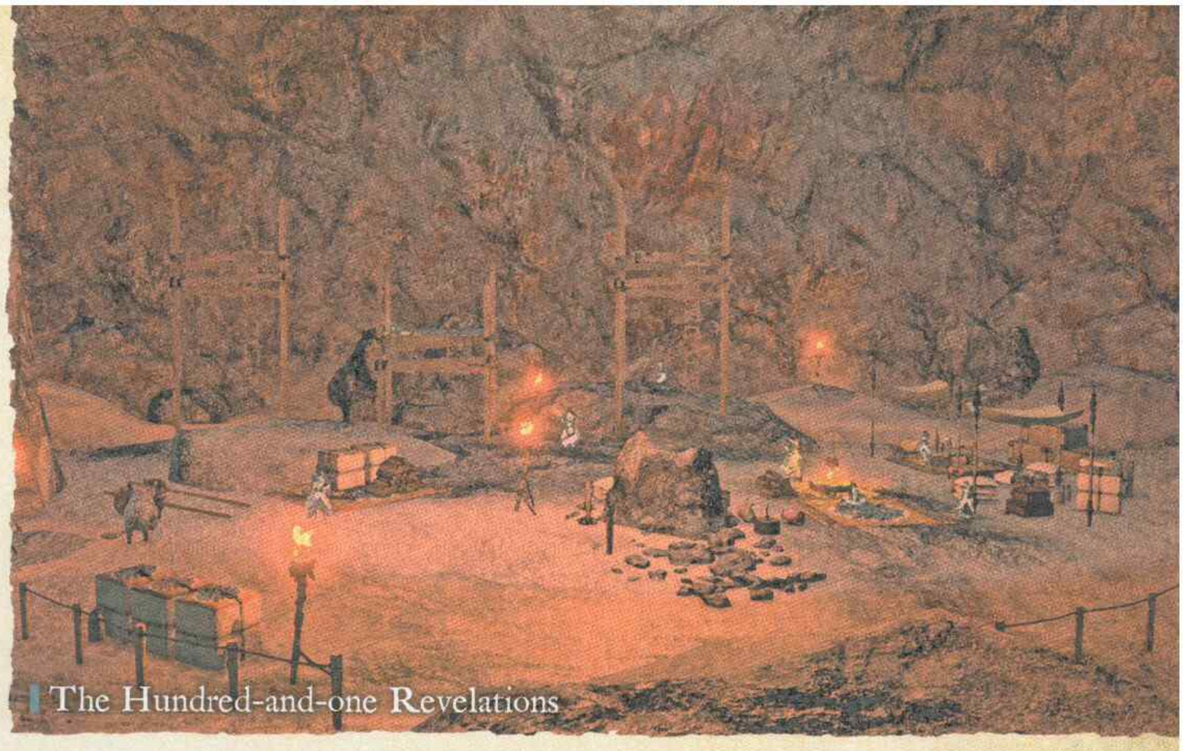
This modest bridge which leads to the Dawn Throne was named for the most esteemed brothers of the Oronir. In the event the fortress is attacked, they are to be the first to descend from the heights above to meet the enemy in battle.

Reunion

Mol Iloh

The Dawn Throne

The House of the Crooked Coin



The Hundred-and-one Revelations

Onsal Hakair

Many khaal flow from the mountains north of the Steppe, and so many tribes are drawn to this region that they might take advantage of the fresh water as they graze their herds.

The House of the Crooked Coin

In a celestial struggle 'twixt Azim and Nhaama, a sliver of her essence was sent tumbling to the earth below. This divine fragment hidden within a mountain cave is said to retain her power, which was harnessed once in the past to avert a terrible calamity.

Moonrise

This path through the northern mountains leads unto the sacred site which houses a fragment of the Dusk Mother's divinity. Though unclear, it is assumed by many that the ascent takes its name from one of the stories relating to this relic.

Chakha Zoh

Resting within this shrine are the bones of a revered Xaela woman who fearlessly faced a monstrous dragon in order to protect her people. It is customary for tribes that triumph at the Naadam to come here to make an offering.

Ceol Aen

A cluster of ancient stone pillars located near Bardam's Mettle, upon each of which the songs of the peoples of the Steppe are graven. Although the pillars' placement may appear haphazard, when the wind blows through them, they are said to come alive with melodies from ages past.

Bardam's Mettle

In order to be recognized as warriors of the Steppe, all Xaela must follow in the footsteps of Bardam the Brave, hero of eld, and prove their worth by taming a yol.

The Towering Still

The winds of the Steppe break upon these towering cliffs, which extend across the western edge of the region. In truth, the Azim Steppe extends far beyond this mountain range, though few outsiders have journeyed beyond and laid eyes on the lands, much less met the tribes which call them home.

The Uyagir Caves

The former home of the Uyagir is said to have been created by the winds of the Steppe, which bored holes into the rock and formed the cave system. At present, a race of oliphant-like beings named Matanga have claimed them as their abode.

The Hundred-and-one Revelations

As the Uyagir themselves tell it, they live within the cave to make amends for the sins of their forebears, who in their hubris strove to subjugate all creation. As punishment, the gods unleashed a plague of enormous beetles upon them. That their children might never forget, their ancestors moved into the cave, and upon its walls painted murals telling of their misdeeds.

Qerel Iloh

The nature of the tragedy which befell the Qerel is unclear, but some claim that their settlement was destroyed by a group of exiles who declared themselves the Chaghan. Regardless of its veracity, the tale serves as an example of the harsh fates which may befall any given Xaela tribe.

Dhoro Iloh

None know for certain why the Dhoro abandoned this settlement, for the tribe continues to make every effort to avoid outside contact. In recent times, however, the plateau has shown signs of unusual activity...

Nhaama's Retreat

As one journeys further southwest, he will find the grasslands gradually give way to sand and desert. Though many tribes would avoid such lands, the Bairon, Mierqid, and Torgud favor them over more hospitable climes.

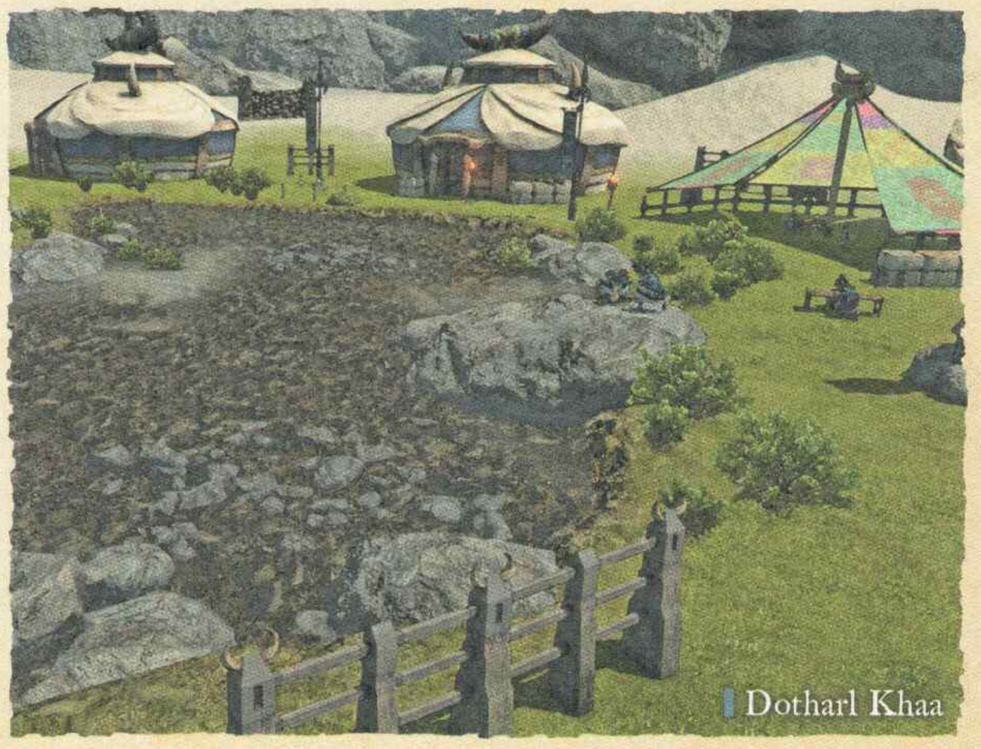
The Dusk Throne

A grand monument marking the sacred site where Nhaama, goddess of the moon, is said to have created a corporeal form of herself and become the Dusk Mother. The sands of time, however, have ever disdained the works of men, and for all its prodigious size, the desert is threatening to swallow it up.

Dotharl Khaa

In the language of the Steppe, "khaa" means a spring, and the Dotharl tribe has laid claim to this particular one. It is a rare oasis in the deathly dry climes of the Nhaama Desert, and travelers are strongly advised to replenish their water supplies ere they continue on.

The Dusk Throne



Dotharl Khaa

THE KINGDOM OF DALMASCA

Built on the sands of the Dalmasca Desert to the south of the Skatay Range, this kingdom prospered for nigh on a thousand years under the peaceful reign of the B'nargin royal line. Thirty years ago, however, Dalmasca fell to the Garlean Empire, and the region become yet another subjugated province.

Overview

Flag

When Dalmasca was yet a kingdom, the B'nargin family's royal coat of arms—known colloquially as the "Suncrest"—was raised as the nation's flag. The Garleans soon forbade Dalmascans from flying the banner, and the once-famous symbol of the sun-drenched desert nation all but disappeared from view.

Motto

He with Sight, Heed it Not

Government

A successful monarchy, the B'nargin dynasty spanned centuries. As one of the corridors between Ilsabard and the eastern lands of Othard, Dalmasca occupies a geopolitically vital location. Yet despite being the target of numerous invasions, the kingdom had a history of repelling even the most determined conquest. That it eventually fell to the Garlean Empire was due to the imperial legions' unexpected route of incursion: their airships soared above the desolate expanse of the Burn, and came across the Skatay Range to overwhelm Dalmasca's lightly defended northern border.

Leader

Raminas B'nargin Dalmasca

Ruling Body

The Blue Council was an assembly of officials which governed under the king's authority. The name originates from the blue-colored tiles of the council's offices.

Racial Distribution

Dalmascan Hyur: 40%
Bangaa: 20%
Seeq: 10%
Viera: 5%
Other: 25%

Religion

The Light of Kiltia is a polytheistic religion based primarily on the worship of the God of Light, and its churches have exerted significant influence on Dalmasca's society since ancient times. There was a period in history, however, when the faithful sought to meddle too deeply in secular matters of governance. This was met with an outcry of disapproval, and resulted in the forcible separation of the affairs of church and state. Despite its once ubiquitous presence, this facet of Dalmascan culture, too, was ground under the heel of the occupying Garleans. Places of worship were either demolished by the imperial military, or gutted and repurposed as entirely different facilities.

Industries

Trade: The Dalmasca Desert and the wasteland known as the Burn are the only existing overland routes between the continents of Ilsabard and Othard. But as the desert has oases and the Burn has none, the availability of water makes the choice of road a simple one. For centuries, Dalmasca prospered as a waypoint for merchant caravans, with the royal capital, Rabanastre, amassing such a rich collection of rare goods from both east and west that ballads named the city the "Desert Sapphire."

Shipping: The mention of Dalmasca conjures images of a kingdom rising from the desert, but at the edge of the sands lies the port city of Valnain, known for its history as a center for shipping. In the Valnard Sea to the south, a lighthouse perches on the lip of the Ridorana Cataract—a gaping maw in the ocean believed to lead into the seventh hell. This spire illuminates the path to the northern sea routes, and thence to the docks of Valnain. With advances in Gyr Abanian navigation techniques, overland caravans slowly gave way to merchant ships, but Dalmasca's hold on the shipping lanes ensured its continued prosperity.

Beliefs

As a nation of diverse peoples, Dalmasca adopted a philosophy of "live and let live" to avoid senseless conflicts. Each race, clan, and tribe held themselves to different ethical and moral standards, but as long as no laws were broken, the questionable actions of other races were largely ignored. After many an ugly and violent dispute motivated by racial differences, it seems that Dalmascans learned the benefits of keeping their thoughts to themselves.

Diet

As well as spices and foodstuffs from across the world, Dalmasca's vibrant trade brought with it foreign recipes, and thus did ancient Dalmascans partake in all manner of culinary fare. Of particular note is the unusual dish the locals would prepare using wild cactus from the desert. The vineyards of Lea Monde were also famed for producing "Valens," an exquisite red wine of complex and delicate flavor, yet its scarcity is now such that even a single bottle would command a small fortune.

The Streets of Rabanastre

After a failed uprising against its imperial rulers, the Dalmascan capital of Rabanastre suffered a violently destructive reprisal. In a fateful twist, the attack intended to leave the city in ruins served to reveal the ancient remnants heretofore concealed below.

Crumbling Bridge

A stone thoroughfare leading to the city's main gate, this structure was built to bear the weight of several dozen carriages crossing at the same time. Its sturdiness, however, was no protection against the explosive firepower of the Empire's gunships, and the loss of this escape route resulted in substantial casualties amongst the capital's residents.

Muthru Bazaar

This market square inside the entrance to Rabanastre was once filled with bustling stalls. Caravans arriving in the royal capital would conduct their initial business here, unloading crates and other heavy cargo, as merchants set to depart the city packed their carts and wagons with goods for the road ahead.

Palace Square

An expansive plaza stretching out before the palace, this site was reserved for royal weddings, military parades, and other such public events. When the palace chambers were commandeered by the imperial viceroy, however, the square became home to a contingent of watchful Garlean soldiers.

North End

Rabanastre's residential district. Once awash with the colorful awnings of street-side shops selling inexpensive goods or tavern fare, the Garlean occupation saw the ward emptied and renovated for the exclusive use of imperial citizens.

Garamsythe Waterway

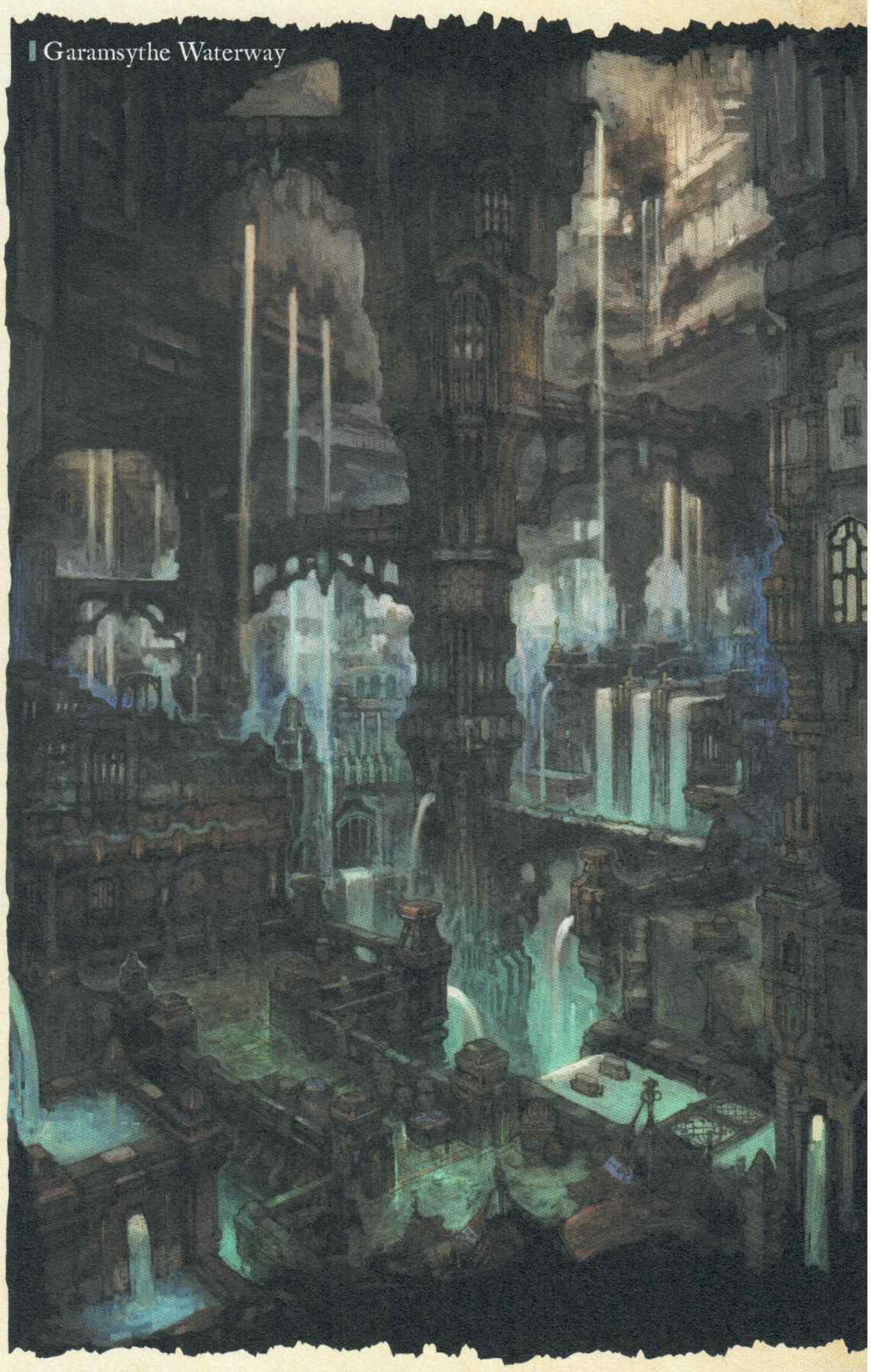
Stretching far below the streets of Rabanastre, this channel was constructed to carry in water from its source in the Skatay Range to the north. The lattice-like architecture of the waterway is confusing to navigate, and those who lose their sense of direction find it all but impossible to find their way out again.

Lesalia Garden Ruins

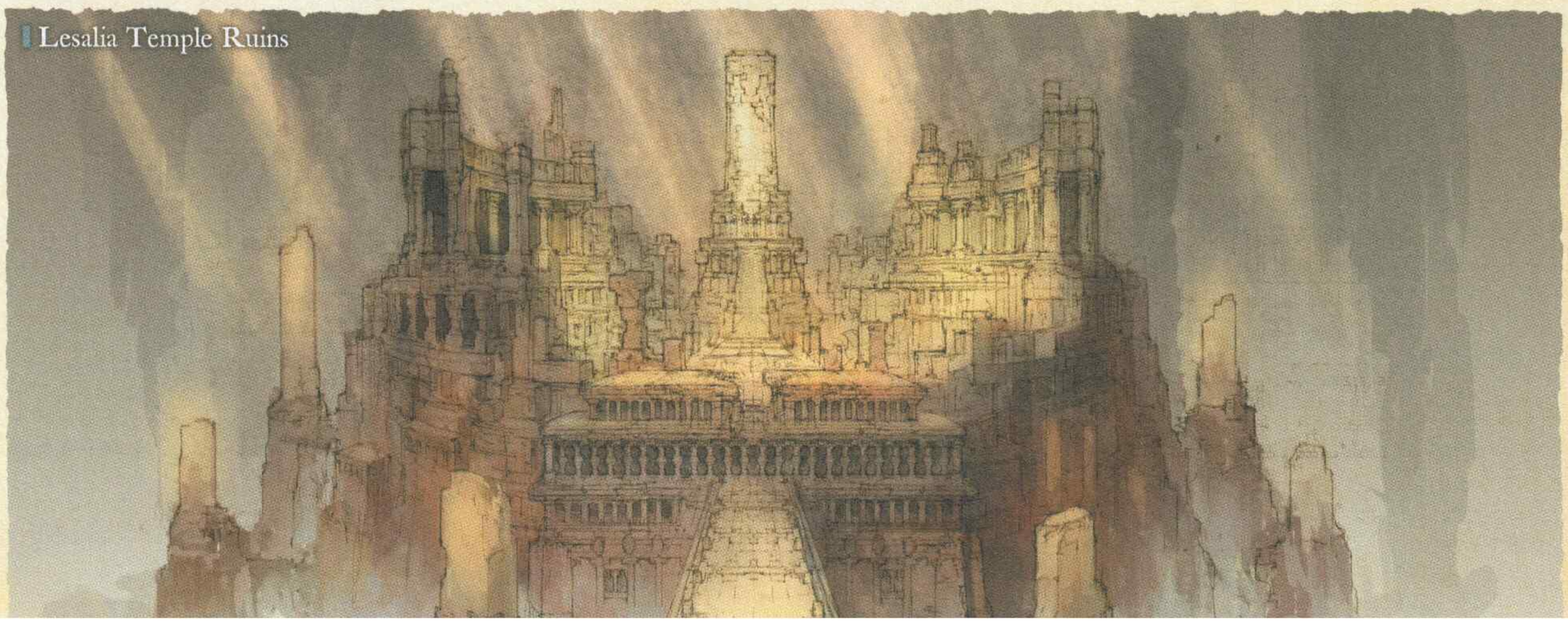
These ruins of an ancient civilization were discovered deep beneath the earth. Jenomis cen Lexentale, the man who discovered them, insists they are the remnants of legendary Lesalia, the royal capital of Ivalice, but thorough archeological surveys have yet to be conducted to substantiate his claims.

Lesalia Temple Ruins

Thought to be a monument to the gods of eld, the true nature of this timeworn but impressive edifice—and the religion once practiced within—remains an enigma. Academics eagerly await for calm to prevail in Dalmasca that they might attempt a more accurate appraisal.



Garamsythe Waterway



Lesalia Temple Ruins

FURTHER READING

Though many hold dear lofty dreams of traveling to faraway lands, not all are blessed with the ability to bring them to fruition. What follows is a list of recommendations for experiencing other realms and cultures instead through the magic of the written word, as found in the appendices of Namazu scholar and bibliophile Seigetsu the Enlightened's first published work, *A Meditation on the Metaphysics of Merrymaking.*

As capable works of scholarship are as innumerous as stars in the heavens, it is through no small amount of labor that I arrived at these seven. Those of lesser mind may ask why seven and not six, or eight, or twelve—but surely you, dear reader, are aware of the number's prevalence in myth, as well as the auspicious qualities it is believed to possess in mine own homeland.

The symbols adjacent to each title represent measures of quality similar to those found in Eorzean publications, though I have opted for a more classically Eastern symbol where Eorzeans would use the star. This sort of elegant cultural synthesis is yet another manifestation of advanced enlightenment.

— Seigetsu the Enlightened

Heavensward

This memoir, penned by Count Edmont de Fortemps, records the circumstances surrounding the end of the millennium-long Dragonsong War in painstaking detail, making it an invaluable primary source for those who would study the Holy See of Ishgard. Its critics point out that, as the head of one of Ishgard's four High Houses and a prominent political figure, Fortemps's portrayal of events can hardly be treated as unbiased; however, his attempt to remain rational and neutral in his retelling is certainly a valiant one.

The White Yonder

Though it may be hard to believe given that the author was a mere boy of fourteen summers at the time of writing, there is no finer source regarding the Sea of Clouds than Honoroit Banlardois's *The White Yonder.* His work, penned in the course of his duties as steward to Lord Emmanellain of House Fortemps, records all the sights and sounds of his journey, and the information contained therein is of the utmost accuracy. Readers will find it the perfect complement to *Heavensward.*

Narrow Road through the Deep Grass

Perhaps the greatest work of travel literature ever produced by the greatest Auri wanderer of them all, *Narrow Road through the Deep Grass* paints a vivid image of the Azim Steppe and those of its inhabitants, the Xaela, that Hoelun encountered on his journey. To read his words is to see the Steppe, rendered in picture-perfect detail, through his eyes. To turn the final page is to finish a journey—to break through crashing waves, each threatening to overwhelm with more insight on Xaela history, philosophy, and culture than the last, onto a placid sea of understanding.

Northward Bound: A Spiritual Journey

An indispensable resource on the oft-ignored regions of Ilsabard that lie north of its central mountain range. The painstaking efforts of its author, who endured frigid winds as he made his way through the entirety of the inhospitable north on increasingly worn snowshoes, are evident in each word put to parchment.

Over the Horizon

Past Aldenard and across the Indigo Deep, which for ages formed the westernmost boundary of the known world, lies the New World. This tome is replete with charming depictions of the Mamool Ja's masonwork cities nestled amidst lush verdure, and other scenes from the western continent.

Unbeaten Tracks in Yanxia

This travelogue is responsible for piquing many a prominent scholar's interest in the genre, and none who would endeavor to learn of Yanxia should omit it from their reading list. Unfortunately, there is currently no Eorzean translation in print.

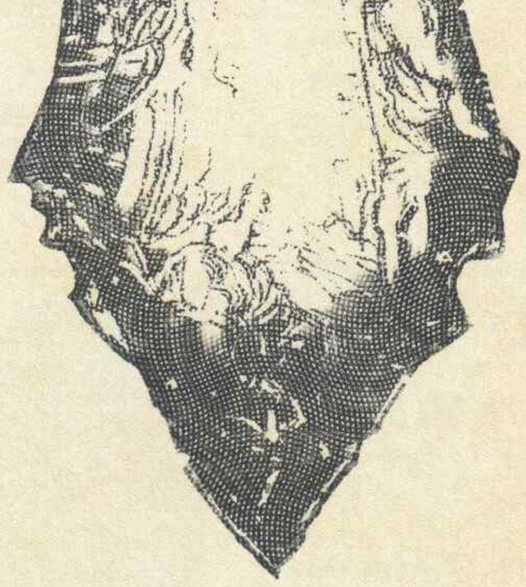
The Chrysanthemum and the Dango

Penned by a government-sponsored scholar of Hingashi, and containing all the information she received in reply to letters written to intellectuals in every locale, *The Chrysanthemum and the Dango* offers a rare and valuable glimpse into life on the enigmatic Hingan isles. Though many have pointed out the issues with its methodology as an anthropological text, it is the only non-primary source to make this list precisely because its influence on modern cultural narratives, for better or worse, cannot be denied.

Encyclopædia Eorzea II

BOOK
IV

HER SERVANTS



THE ALA MHIGAN RESISTANCE

A movement founded to cast off the shackles of imperial oppression, the Resistance was built upon a core of veteran members—revolutionaries who rose up against King Theodoric in the last days of the Ala Mhigan monarchy. Since Ala Mhigo's liberation, the Resistance has since been established as the nation's official military force.

Meffrid Noward

"We're Ala Mhigans, and Ala Mhigans never forsake one another, hardships be damned!"

A determined Highlander man with a self-taught style of swordsmanship, Meffrid and his companions found sanctuary in Little Ala Mhigo after an adventurer assisted them in the Black Shroud. Despite the dangers involved, however, Meffrid elected to return to Gyr Abania, where he became a pivotal member in Conrad's band of freedom fighters. He fought bravely when Zenos launched an assault on Rhalgr's Reach, but fell to the blade of Fordola rem Lupis, leader of the Skulls. Aged thirty-eight at the time of his death, Meffrid left behind a wife and child—a family to whom he had long ago said his farewells. Such was his way of sparing them the consequences of his choice to lead a life in the Resistance.

M'naago Rahz

"It's the waiting that drives me mad. Standing around, knowing what's to come. I'll never get used to it."

This twenty-two-year-old Peering Stones native joined the Resistance to help free her people, the M tribe, from the tyranny of the Empire. Although M'naago dreamed of fighting even at the tender age of fifteen, her father insisted that she first master the hunter's path, lest she prove a burden to the cause. And so she spurned mundane skills such as cooking and the like, and focused solely on bow and blade. It was two summers past when M'rahz Nunh, M'naago's sire, at last permitted her to become a Resistance soldier. Known for her bright personality and unrelenting candor, it often fell to M'naago to bring her comrades back from the edge of despair. In the wake of the war, she now serves as Lyse's second-in-command, and is involved in procuring funds for bereaved families.

Wiscar Marshe

"I'll make him proud.
I'll make them all proud!"

Now a spirited man of twenty summers, Wiscar was once a hostile youth, disillusioned by a harsh upbringing in the poverty-stricken village of Ala Gannha. It was this hard-hearted attitude that allowed him to survive whilst other Ala Mhigans his age were hanging on the Griffin's every word and volunteering for missions from which none would return. Thus when Lyse and Meffrid first came to his settlement to recruit soldiers, Wiscar refused their entreaties. He was soon forced to rethink his stance, however, after a complete stranger rescued one of his fellow villagers—a man Wiscar had given up for dead. He would later enlist as a soldier of the Resistance, and learn basic swordsmanship from Meffrid. Encouraged by the advice of an adventurer, the young Highlander's combat philosophy is rooted in the idea of "when in doubt, double your efforts!"

J'olhmyn Abah

"My 'feminine wiles?' I'm a soldier.
Hardly the sort that has secret admirers."

Born in the town of Ala Ghiri alongside others of the J tribe, J'olhmyn grew up with the local inns and merchants catering to the occupation force, and was no stranger to the casual cruelties of imperial soldiers. Such experiences fostered a desire to join those fighting their oppressors, and on her eighteenth nameday, she broke ties with her mother and fled her home. Her explanation she left in a letter: she would enlist with the Resistance.

Now twenty-three summers old and a soldier in her own right, J'olhmyn would form a bond with Alpa, an Ananta battlemaiden also stationed at Rhalgr's Reach—a bond which deepened as they worked to repurpose Castellum Velodyna, and overcome the differences between their peoples.

Giff Boarshead

"Full glad am I that us griffin riders can help keep the Velodyna region safe. It's not the easiest place to patrol on foot, so I'm sure we can make a difference."

Giff is a Highlander man of forty-two summers, and the chief beast trainer of the Ala Mhigan Resistance. In the time before the Empire's invasion, he belonged to the royal regiment of griffin riders, where he learned to raise and train the feathered beastkin. As a fervent patriot, Giff expressed a loathing for the soulless architecture of the imperials, and advocated for the destruction of Castellum Velodyna.

Orella Rushton

"Too many wounded, too little medicine, too much to worry about. So I don't. Instead, I pray every day for the fighting to end."

A Highlander woman of twenty-nine summers, Orella "Heavenstouch" works as an infirmary healer for the Resistance. Some years ago, she and her family were conscripted by the Empire and forced to labor on the construction of a castrum. Long hours and unsanitary conditions led to the outbreak of pestilence, and despite her best efforts to nurse them back to health, her father and brothers all succumbed to exhaustion and illness. A committed Resistance member, Orella has ever since continued her battles against untimely death.

CAST OF KUGANE

In an infamous Hingan trading port, the Scions are met by a host of characters whose colorful quirks stand out even against the vibrant cityscape within which they reside. The following is a selection of personages encountered in Kugane.

Hancock Fitzgerald

"It's all quite logical once you learn the language."

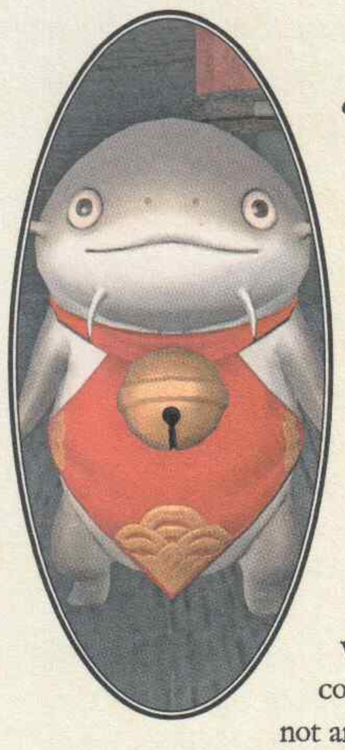
Abandoned by his parents at an unremembered age, Hancock spent his early years as a street urchin, scrounging in the back alleys of Ul'dah. He knew neither the love nor comfort of family, but did inherit the gift of a perfect memory and a head for numbers. The precocious youth also taught himself to read, and he employed these diverse talents in the antique book market, buying up cheap tomes unrecognized for their value, and reselling them for a substantial profit. When word of this enterprising lad reached the ears of Lord Lolorito, the merchant prince offered Hancock a position in the East Aldenard Trading Company. It was in the company's offices that the sight of an ukiyo-e print first awoke in Hancock a love for all things Far Eastern.

Keiten Hakuuchi

"I bid you welcome to Kogane Dori. Be it goods from near or far, all can be obtained here. For the right price, of course."

Keiten, a fifty-three-year-old Roegadyn of Far Eastern origin, holds the position of market overseer in Kugane. It is his job to provide permissions for new stalls and maintain trading standards for local and foreign merchants, as well as perform the role of tax collector. Ordinarily a pleasant and approachable man, Keiten is a veritable demon when it comes to threats to Kugane's economic status quo, and will employ any means necessary to remove those who prove uncooperative. Without this ruthless streak, however, it is unlikely he would long stay in control of the city's gaggle of crafty shopkeeps. Aside from these responsibilities, Keiten's largest concern is for his eldest son's aspirations for the stage. He would sooner his son surrender foolish dreams of becoming an actor, and concentrate on the family business.

Gyodo



"Nothing personal, yes, yes? Just business."

A shiftless Namazu whose primary interests are gambling, tea-drinking, and napping, Gyodo's claim that he is a fisherman is flimsy at best. Though he may once have earned his daily coin harvesting shellfish and seaweed, his fishing boat has long since been seized to cover unpaid debts. His financial woes caught the attention of an agent employed by the Garlean Consulate in Kugane, who convinced Gyodo to work as an imperial informant for a handful of coins and a potful of tea. Thus it was money—and not any political agenda—which motivated the Namazu to betray Gosetsu and the Scions to their enemies. Those that have met Gyodo would agree that a desire to earn a purse without the unpleasantness of labor may be his only reliable quality.

Kotokaze Benitoki

"Welcome, traveler. Can I interest you in some rice wine?"

Kotokaze Benitoki is the current proprietress of the Shiokaze Hostelry, the finest drinking establishment in Kugane. Now thirty-eight years of age, this Far Eastern Hyur took over from the previous owner a full decade ago, but is notoriously private about her life from before that time. Those who ask about the patch over her right eye will be treated to a gentle smile, and nothing more. Persisting with a second question will earn a glare from her left eye, and further interrogation is commonly rumored to invite a flurry of punches.

Skilled in the culinary arts, with sea pickles a specialty, Kotokaze also has connections with a Koshu brewery, allowing her to offer patrons a selection of exclusive junmaishu—the availability of which is seen by some as a possible link to her inscrutable past.

Karaku Okeya

"Come one, come all! Burns, cuts, embarrassing rashes—there is naught that the mystical waters of the Bokaisen Hot Springs cannot heal!"

Karaku is the owner of Bokaisen—a venue with hot springs and a breathtaking view of the ocean. Owing to the lodging's popularity with foreign visitors, this fifty-five-year-old Hyur considers himself an ambassador for Hingashi, and is unfailingly polite in all areas of hospitality. His one weakness is said to be a penchant for good luck talismans, particularly those which feature tiny dragons.

Estrild Harphill

"I've neither time nor patience for the weak. Let the Hunt cull them from our ranks, I say."

Once it became known that adventurers were flocking to the lands across the sea, Clan Centurio's master, Ser Leaudaste, dispatched a number of members to establish a presence in the Far East. Estrild, a Midlander Hyur of twenty-eight summers, is the face of the Clan's Kugane branch. Estrild's pitch to potential recruits occasionally veers into the callous, but it is unsure if this is part of her personality or merely an act intended to arouse interest.

CAST OF THE RUBY SEA

Between the continent of Othard and the islands of Hingashi lies the Ruby Sea, home to fishermen, pirates, and the beast tribe known as the Kojin. Its waters also hide the settlement of Sui-no-Sato, whose people shun contact with the outside world.

Soroban

"How wide and beautiful she is, the Ruby Sea! Filled with promise and adventure and treasures—many wonderful treasures!"

A Blue Kojin merchant of thirty-two summers, Soroban gathered riches from the Ruby Sea to sell in Kugane's markets. His nascent soul resided in an abacus before birth, giving rise to his Kojin name and the gift of a calculating mind–a quality which led him to risk saving an adventurer in need that he might forge ties with the East Aldenard Trading Company. Once Soroban has formed a connection, however, his integrity demands that he render assistance when needed, regardless of the cost to himself. Thus his relationship with the Warrior of Light and Tataru saw him tangled in the affairs of the Four Lords, his intention to offer a profitable endeavor ending with him dragged along a grueling path towards spiritual enlightenment. It is said that amongst the Blue Kojin, Soroban harbors the greatest potential for divine mysticism.

Bunchin

"Tamamizu is open to you, friend. Full glad are we to welcome any and all, and the treasures they might bring unto us."

The Kojin believe that newborn souls reside in an object for a time before passing into an egg, and it is from these objects that Kojin gain their individual qualities, as well as their names. Bunchin, a venerable Kojin of the Blue and the elder of Tamamizu, is named after the Far Eastern word for "paperweight." In the past, his peers often mocked him for his slow and languorous motions, and even as the dignified leader he has become, Bunchin does not care to be addressed by this unflattering appellation. In all other things, however, the elder's generosity is as an unbound sea, and the favorable relationship which now exists between adventurers and the Blue is in large part by virtue of his compassionate leadership.

Nayoshi Kaifu

"I wish I knew what about me continues to attract these fiendish creatures."

A young Roegadyn fisherman from the village of Isari, Nayoshi is afflicted with a strange knack for reeling in monstrous sea life. Unsurprisingly, his fellow villagers considered this "talent" a troublesome curse, and urged him to take up a new, less life-threatening profession. For the distraught twenty-three-year-old, the choice came down to continuing his beloved fishing despite the risks, or walking away from the ocean forever. It was through the intervention of an adventurer, however, that Nayoshi succeeded in turning his shortcoming into a windfall for his destitute settlement, with the fatty bombfish he pulls up now providing the oil required to revive the lucrative practice of torch fishing.

Koruri Mizuhiki

"When you are fishing, you must shut down all your thoughts and concentrate solely upon seeing—nay, feeling—the great expanse of water that stretches out before you."

Koruri is known as Isari's best diver—and not only for her skill at swimming, or the length she can hold her breath. As well as the ability to memorize the formations of the nearby coral reefs, she boasts extensive knowledge of the types of fish and seaweed which live upon each outcropping. Such an understanding of the ocean's bounty allowed the Hyuran woman to provide for her family, even under the oppressive rule of the Empire.

Although she shares an age with Nayoshi, a youth considered to be the village's worst fisherman, the vast difference between the size of their catches proved a barrier to friendship in a society which values fishing prowess above all else. Now that Nayoshi has found a way to utilize his unusual talents, however, the bond between the two has begun to flourish.

Ikaruga Hatasashi

"We have been given strict orders to monitor all foreign vessels passing through this area. It is far more taxing than it sounds for, in addition to that, we must also contend with the Confederates."

This thirty-two-year-old Hyur is the third son of Clan Hatasashi, one of the lesser warrior houses. With little prospect for inheriting the clan's leadership, Ikaruga was permitted to become a bakufu officer on the condition that he serve at the Ruby Price. Should he commit any major missteps over three years of service, however, his standing will be forfeit—thus does he put aside thoughts of the wife and young daughter he left behind, and remain focused upon carrying out his duty.

Kikimo Kimo

"People say there is no such thing as a bargain. They are wrong."

A Dunesfolk woman of twenty-seven summers, this harried sales clerk for the East Aldenard Trading Company has been tasked by Hancock with obtaining luxury goods from the Ruby Sea at cutthroat prices. Fortunately, fate has seen fit to acquaint Kikimo with the Confederacy's treasurer, a relationship which has garnered significant profits for her company, and a bright future for her career.

THE CONFEDERACY

This independent fleet of pirates prowls the waters of the Ruby Sea. It is during the Scions' journey from Kugane to Yanxia that they encounter members of the Confederacy, and have their eyes opened to certain harsh realities of the imperial occupation.

Representative of the Confederacy's colorful history, the profusion of symbols on this flag also embodies the organization's diverse nature and its policy of accepting any who would join its ranks.

History

In a time long, long ago, when Hingashi was engulfed in endless war, a band of exiles on the island of Sasaki raised their cups to celebrate the formation of a new brotherhood—the Confederacy. Their numbers swelled with the ranks of the desperate and the dispossessed, until eventually they became the dominant force in the Ruby Sea. Boldly ignoring traditions which forbid landfall on the sacred isle of Onokoro, they built their fortress of Crick at the very foot of Heaven-on-High, and began demanding a toll known as the "Ruby Tithe" from vessels which sought passage across their waters.

Down through the years, their fleet often came into conflict with Doman and Hingan military factions, but the Confederacy's leaders fiercely maintained the organization's independence, and avoided pledging fealty to any one nation. This freedom came under threat, however, after the Empire usurped the lands of Doma, and acting viceroy Yotsuyu looked to tighten her merciless grip upon the neighboring seas. Faced with annihilation, the Confederacy chose to lend its strength to Doma's liberation efforts.

Rasho Mastbreaker

"No matter how deep a man's hatreds may run, he cannot let them dictate his actions. The good of the Confederacy takes precedence over all."

A thirty-seven-year-old native of Doma who lost his family to the Empire's invasion, Rasho was taken in by the Confederacy over two decades ago. He broke ties with his homeland as the pirates' oath required, but thoughts of revenge would linger, driving the Roegadyn to the practice field day after day, spear in hand. Then one day, Rasho's chance for vengeance arrived. Seeking to extract the Ruby Tithe from a passing ship, the pirates approached to see that an imperial officer stood upon the vessel's deck. Rasho made to leap the rails, but was stopped by his captain, and earned a stay in the brig for his actions. A fellow former Doman later visited him in his cell, warning that had he laid hands upon the imperial, every Confederate member would have paid the price. "Do not make me endure the loss of this family, as well." Sobered by his countryman's words, Rasho relinquished his hold on the past, and went on to assume leadership of the Confederacy.

Tansui the Foxed

"The captain's word is final. Can't say I didn't warn you."

Born in a poverty-stricken farming village in Hingashi, Tansui was witness to families selling off their children simply to have one less mouth to feed. Seeking to avoid the same fate, the young Hyur fled his home, and drifted into the welcoming arms of the Confederacy. When Doma fell to the Empire some years later, it was Tansui who was given the task of supervising the orphans who joined their ranks. Thus did fate introduce him to Rasho, "a boy far too big to have a voice so small." They soon formed a well-balanced friendship, with Tansui eventually assuming the position of Rasho's infamous second-in-command. In this capacity, the thirty-eight-year-old serves as both the Confederacy leader's mouthpiece and confidante—a role Tansui appears content to play until the day he dies.

Tsukikage Urabe

"Gentlemen, since you refuse to pay the Ruby Tithe with coin, you shall instead be paying with your blood. I believe an arm each will suffice."

A Raen of forty-eight summers, Tsukikage is responsible for overseeing the Confederacy's treasury. Although reluctant to speak of his past, his arithmetical and literary talents betoken an extensive education—the fruits of which he puts to work in his present employment. Efficient and diligent, Tsukikage is also known for the consideration he shows towards his subordinates, Suzume and Hansaku.

Suzume Kaisuri

"Have you watched as your father and mother bled to death before your very eyes!? How does one forget that!?"

Born into a family known for its shell jewelry, Suzume lost her parents when raiders sacked her village. The Roegadyn found a new family with the Confederacy, and now, at twenty-seven years of age, she helps manage the pirates' financial assets as Tsukikage's right hand. Suzume's path would eventually bring her across the brutes who cut down her parents, and tempt her into forsaking her oath for the chance at revenge.

Hansaku Ushikai

"Life has been hard—really hard—for me lately, and if things were to fall apart here, I'd have nowhere to go..."

After a troubled childhood, Hansaku fell in with the worst sort of people—an unsavory gang of bandits who forced the Hyuran orphan into a life of violent lawlessness. Hansaku managed to extricate himself from their clutches, but despite finding sanctuary with the Confederacy, his past was not so easily escaped. It was an adventurer that would help him face the demons he had attempted to outrun, and now, at the age of twenty-three summers, he is learning the treasurer's trade.

Ihanashi Bakuro

"Well, let's just say I'm not a pirate anymore. I'm going to live in Doma with my father. We're free!"

A boy of seventeen summers, Ihanashi left the Doman Enclave to join the pirates of the Ruby Sea when his father—his only living relative—was conscripted by the imperial army. As fortune would have it, however, his father was released during a recent prisoner exchange, and Rasho permitted the young Hyur to break ties with the Confederacy and return to Doma.

SUI-NO-SATO

Dwelling in the depths of the Ruby Sea, the denizens of Sui-no-Sato have long shunned the world above. Not even fisherfolk or the Confederacy, who share the same waters, have had much contact with these reclusive folk.

History

In ages past, weary of the wars that rage ceaselessly on the Azim Steppe, a clan of Au Ra fled to neighboring Yanxia to seek out new lives. In the beginning, they met with scorn from the region's native inhabitants, but through perseverance and hard work they won the favor of influential families and gained acceptance. This clan was known as the Raen, and its members would spread across the Far East, from the lands of Nagxia to the isles of Hingashi.

No matter where they came to be, with their innate martial prowess, they readily found employment as soldiers and carved out places for themselves within spheres of authority. Yet not all chose this life. Some few desired to leave conflict behind completely, and availing themselves of Kojin wisdom, they created a great bubble of air at the bottom of the Ruby Sea, within which they built a village—Sui-no-Sato. To govern their fledgling society, they founded a system of hereditary rule led by the Ruby Princess, under whose guidance they live a life of seclusion, away from the troubles and turmoils of the surface.

Kurenai Shisui

"Our forefathers chose change. And now, as ruler, I judged it past time for another change."

As the reigning Ruby Princess, Kurenai rules over her subjects in Sui-no-Sato, but she herself is subject to myriad laws. Since birth, she has been forbidden from leaving Shisui of the Violet Tides, the palace of her line. Resigned to living out her days within its confines, she eagerly took to tomes and through them learned about the world beyond.

However, she would have no choice but to venture outside for the first time in her twenty-one summers when a terrible voidsent took her dear friend and lady-in-waiting, Hisui, for its thrall. By the valor of an adventurer she chanced to meet in Sui-no-Sato was the being vanquished and the palace freed from its dark influence. The brief journey she embarked upon in the course of this incident prompted her to reconsider the future of her people, and, disguising herself, the Raen maiden set out once more—on a mission to forge ties with the outside world.

Shiosai Sui

"Leave this place and never return.
We have no need of wide-eyed wanderers."

Shiosai is the twenty-seven-year-old high priest of Shisui of the Violet Tides. Possessing mastery over water magicks, he sealed away the palace when wraiths overran its halls. If the ward should fail, he was prepared to see everything and everyone drowned, even the Ruby Princess, and thence atone for the deed with his life. Such a grim resolve bespeaks his serious disposition despite his relative youth. Duty never far from his mind, he wears a perpetual frown and is given to stern silences, though gossip attributes this to some manner of stomach ailment.

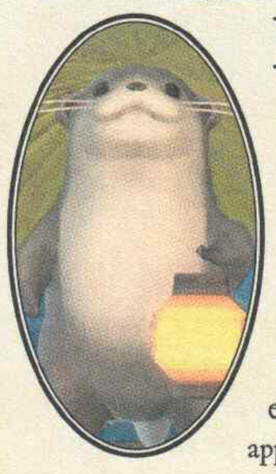
On the rare occasions the Raen priest allows himself a moment's respite—most certainly at his liege's insistence—he is said to play the flute. Though believed to be a virtuoso of the instrument, he admits no audience and none save his pet otter, Isobe, can attest to his skills. The princess's recent interest in the outside world has given Shiosai more cares with which to contend.

Hisui Sui

"My place is beside the princess."

Lady-in-waiting to the Ruby Princess, Hisui has known Kurenai since childhood. As blood relatives, albeit distant, they bear a striking resemblance to one another, and the twenty-two-year-old Raen maiden is sometimes called upon to pose as her liege. However, on one such occasion during a court ritual, she was possessed by a voidsent, and it fell to an adventurer to enter the palace and rescue her.

Isobe



"<chirp> <chirp>"

Though appearing to be Shiosai's pet, if Isobe could talk, he would vehemently insist on the opposite. Keenly aware of his charge's dour nature, the cuddlesome otter has taken it upon himself to soften the high priest's hard edges that he might be more approachable to those around him. To the extent which he responds to his name, it is assumed that he approves of it, but his precise age is unknown.

Ihanami Sui

"Have you any news from Doma?
If so, we should like very much to hear it."

Father to Yugiri, Ihanami is a skilled stonemason, an esteemed trade in Sui-no-Sato, where buildings are set upon foundations of bedrock. He is presently training his two sons to follow in his footsteps, but he can do little save worry for his only daughter, who has chosen to follow her own heart. As she hurls herself into the thick of danger, he cannot help but feel ashamed for having known only obedience in his fifty years.

Yunagi Sui

"When next you see our daughter, pray tell her not a day goes by that her parents and her brothers do not think of her."

When Yugiri was a child, she spoke to her parents passionately about protecting Sui-no-Sato—saying that they cannot simply hide from the rest of the world. Often does Yunagi torment herself over that moment. Had she made a greater effort to listen, would her daughter not have left? Now forty and eight, every day she prays for Yugiri's safety, and the news of Doma's liberation brought tears of relief and pride to her eyes.

THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF YANXIA

Upon crossing the Ruby Sea, the Scions of the Seventh Dawn were greeted with the sight of a verdant region nourished by the One River—Yanxia. Here they would meet folk of all walks of life, yet all shared the yoke of imperial oppression that had strangled these lands for twenty-five long years.

Isse Shibunuri

"When you come back, we'll finish what we started. We'll beat the imperials and we'll win our freedom!"

A native of Namai, Isse lost his mother and father in the previous Doman uprising. Though they maintained a façade as upstanding members of the village, in truth they fought for the Liberation Front and ultimately died in battle. Before his parents' lifeless bodies, Isse was beaten and forced to swear obedience to the Empire—a traumatic experience which left the young Hyur deeply scarred. Through his meeting with the Warrior of Light and his comrades, however, he would find a way to overcome the past.

While leadership runs in his blood and he is exceptionally mature for his nineteen summers, Isse is known to suffer from youthful bashfulness on occasion—especially where it pertains to a certain shinobi he admires. Yet for all his flaws, he cannot be faulted for his dedication to his sister, Azami, for whom he would gladly give his life.

Azami Shibunuri

"Brother's still too shy to speak to Lady Yugiri. He can't even say thank you!"

Younger sister to Isse, Azami is likewise mature for her years. The twelve-year-old well knows how her brother worries for her, and she tries her utmost to lighten his burdens. For her daily routine, she visits their parents' grave and makes sure there are always fresh flowers. Possessed of a noble heart, she showed the stricken Tsuyu kindness when others were baying for blood, proffering the persimmon the woman had sought—a gesture that was more powerful than she may ever know.

Though set aside for the present, the Hyuran lass harbors aspirations to become a writer, and one day she will be credited as the author of a book about the life of the woman named Yotsuyu, but that is a future as yet unconsidered. For the time being, she focuses on being there to support her brother, who has developed a fondness for a lady shinobi.

Tsuranuki Kaneuchi

"All the armor I can provide, you will have. I will labor until I can no longer lift my hammer!"

A smith in the Doman Enclave, Tsuranuki was a fervent proponent of Doman liberation. He and others of like mind spurred Lord Kaien to rise up against the Empire, but the rebellion failed and their beloved master was slain trying to protect his people from the carnage that swept through the enclave. Filled with regret and despair, the Hyur turned his back on smithing—his life's purpose—and, sequestering himself within Kusakari, he would ridicule all who spoke to him of freedom.

But win her freedom Doma eventually did, and at the grizzled age of sixty-two, Tsuranuki found his purpose once more. Declaring that he would devote his remaining years to the rebuilding effort, he set about his work with a fire to rival his blazing forge. At this time, his long-standing rivalry with the papermaker Araragi was also renewed, the sounds of their public bickering ringing sweetly to those who had known the enclave in better days.

Otoya Tsurugi

"Yea, verily."

Head of the Tsurugi Clan, which has long served the Rijin, Otoya comes from a long line of great warriors. Like Hakuro, with whom he has ever enjoyed a friendly rivalry, he was conscripted into the imperial army. However, when the riverboat transporting him and other Doman soldiers met with an accident, Otoya used the occasion to fake his death and rejoin the fight as a member of the Liberation Front, and thereafter worked tirelessly to overthrow their oppressors. He was even present during the assault on Doma Castle, and while accompanying Lord Hien is said to have cut down countless Garlean soldiers.

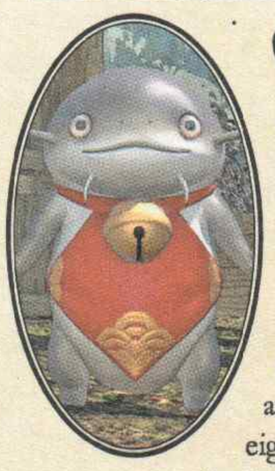
Following the Alliance's victory in Ala Mhigo, Otoya was reunited with Hakuro, and together they serve as Lord Hien's advisors and protectors. Though the samurai of thirty and six summers converses easily with his rival over games of mahjong, he is otherwise a man of few words, and when in the presence of the Warrior of Light holds his tongue as a gesture of respect.

Kurobana Gunji

"Weed plucking actually sounds quite nice! I have always enjoyed little odd jobs like that."

Kurobana is Hakuro's trueborn brother. With his father slain during the Garlean invasion and his sibling taken hostage, he was left to fend for himself and their sickly mother. Despite being born into a proud line of warriors, he was not blessed with martial talents and struggled to adapt to his new life in Namai. But watched over by the Warrior of Light, the Namazu merchant Gyorin, and others around him, the Lupin of five and twenty summers would find a path of his own.

Gyorin



"To be rich, to be wealthy, beyond compare. And then to have an apron made for me that is mine and mine alone. Yes, yes, that is my dream."

The ambitious young proprietor of *The New Rich*. As a wide-eyed fry, Gyorin read an emakimono which told an ancient tale of a poor merchant who rose to great heights, and ever since he has dreamed of achieving the same. Now eighteen, while the Namazu still has much and more to learn, he has no shortage of zeal. Every day he works tirelessly at his business, which of late has brought him as far as the Azim Steppe.

THE MOL TRIBE

A rather small tribe whose people have made a temporary home for themselves in the northeast corner of the Azim Steppe. Despite claiming victory in the most recent Naadam, they are content to keep to themselves in Mol Iloh.

History

More than fifty distinct Xaela tribes are known to roam the Azim Steppe, and to outsiders the Mol are not remarkably different from the others. They too tend to herds of lamb, horse, and dzo, and lead them to different lands to ensure they are well fed. Compared to more prominent tribes, they are small and weak, and generally refrain from taking part in the Naadam, the great battle for supremacy of the Steppe.

Their fortunes changed following the failed Doman rebellion of yesteryear, when a woman of the Mol came upon a wounded Hien Rijin and took him back to Mol Iloh. After the young heir regained his strength, he resolved to return to his homeland at the head of a Xaela army. With the aid of his faithful retainer, Gosetsu, as well as the Warrior of Light and Lyse Hext, he led the Mol to victory in the Naadam, and convinced the Dotharl and Oronir to aid him and the Mol in the coming battle.

Among the Xaela, the Mol are said to be particularly religious, and this is reflected in their practice of deferring all major decisions to an udgan who communes with the old gods. At present, this role is fulfilled by Temulun, who also serves as khatun of the tribe.

Cirina of the Mol

"The Mol are lambs among wolves.
Long were we content to remain apart and live quietly..."

A woman of twenty-one summers, Cirina journeyed deep into the mountains at the behest of Temulun Khatun, and there found Hien Rijin, who had been injured during his flight from Doma. Through him, she would later meet others from the lands beyond the Steppe, including the famed Warrior of Light. As is the case with many Mol, she has no love for battle, and would rather pass her days in good company fashioning felt and snacking on fresh buuz. Like her grandmother, she has capacity to become an udgan, and may well succeed her someday. However, she is a warrior of the Steppe in her own right, having passed through Bardam's Mettle, and her performance during the Naadam was enough to earn her the respect and friendship of Sadu of the Dotharl. Though she is known to many as Cirina of the Laughing Reeds, at times she looks to the south in silence, as if deep in thought, before mouthing a silent prayer.

The Singing Rainbow

That she might succeed in walking in the footsteps of Bardam the Brave, Cirina fashioned this weapon herself. Wood being a rare commodity on the Steppe, she had no choice but to trade a goodly stock of felt at Reunion for the necessary materials.

Temulun of the Mol

"Cherish the stars and the light they bring you in the dark."

The khatun of the Mol is possessed of tremendous power, even for an udgan, and it is said that she needs only hearken to the winds of the Steppe to hear the whispers of the old gods. It is a responsibility she does not bear lightly, for the gods have asked much of her in her seventy years, such as when they bade her send her son and daughter on a journey by themselves. Though her son returned with knowledge of new lands for the tribe, he would do so alone. Years later, he too would give his life that the Mol might thrive, once more in service to the old gods. Such is the lot of the Mol udgan—to know naught of the future, yet nevertheless be bound to lead their people into it.

The Shawl of Whispers

Unlike the crimson clothing of most Mol, the udgan traditionally wear white as a symbol of spiritual purity. These seers are forbidden from taking life—even that of animals—and so their garments must remain free of blood.

THE ORONIR TRIBE

The strongest tribe in the region, the Oronir currently occupy the Dawn Throne, having won the right to do so through their triumph in previous Naadams. Though the Mol claimed victory in the most recent of these contests, they had no interest in relocating, and so the Oronir were free to remain where they were.

History

Historically, the Oronir have been one of the dominant tribes in the southeast corner of the Steppe. Unlike most Xaela, who believe themselves the children of the Dusk Mother, the Oronir trace their lineage to the Dawn Father, and believe it is their duty to watch over and keep the Xaela safe. As direct descendants of the avatar of Azim, they believe themselves superior to other tribes—though said tribes are not wont to agree. Nevertheless, theirs are formidable warriors who have claimed the ovoo countless times in the Naadam, including the one prior to the Mol's most recent victory.

The hierarchy within the tribe is determined through the Azim Bökh, a wrestling competition which pits brother against brother. The strongest and therefore most worthy is then declared the most radiant brother and leader of the Oronir.

Magnai of the Oronir

"Ahh, war. To wield power, to make men kneel before you. There is no better feeling."

A warrior of unparalleled strength, the most radiant brother of the Oronir excelled in both combat and hunting since the moment he could wield a weapon. Fiercely proud of his heritage, this man of twenty and seven summers puts little store by words, believing great feats to speak for themselves, and indeed he has many to his name, which might lead some to consider him a heroic figure. However, despite (or perhaps because of) these qualities, he has struggled to reconcile his rather high expectations for a bride.

As a child, Magnai was a hopeless romantic fascinated with the legends surrounding the Oronir and their destined partners—their Nhaama. Though most of his brothers grew more pragmatic with age, the most radiant only became more preoccupied with this ideal... and deaf to the words of wisdom of his five elder sisters. Instead, he continued to hone his skills, believing that the strength to split the earth asunder and smite fell beasts would surely attract the attention of his beloved-to-be, his gentle, ethereal maiden. To his credit, perhaps, Magnai is more than willing to take no for an answer, for he truly believes that were he to meet his Nhaama, they would not refuse him for even a moment.

Scale of the Father

This great axe has been passed down through generations of Oroniri leaders. Legend has it that the weapon was forged from one of Father Azim's scales of midnight, cast off from his armor during a duel with the Dusk Mother. To this day it pulses with the divine light of the Dawn Father.

Esugen of the Oronir

"There is no greater joy than cooking for me."

In the forty years he has lived, this humble culinarian has yet to win a single match in the Azim Bökh, and consequently has ever been considered the least radiant. While others are permitted to hunt and fight, he has been forced to remain within the safety of the encampment and prepare food for his brothers and sisters. However, this led him to discover his true calling, for he is a master of Oroniri cuisine, and even capable of replicating the recipes of other tribes.

Baatu of the Oronir

"We shall be swift as stallions and fierce as baras. The Steppe will be ours once more!"

The right hand of the most radiant is fervently devout, fearing even to enter those places where the light of the Dawn Father cannot reach, such as the depths of Azim Khaat. It is perhaps because of this shared faith, as well as their enduring friendship, that he has no difficulty speaking his mind to Magnai. Like many Oronir, Baatu tends to regard those of others tribes as his lessers, though he is quicker to recognize one's worth and afford them a measure of respect.

Though Baatu is but a year older than Magnai, he has been married for three years to a talented healer, whose skillful ministrations saw him make a full recovery from the grave injuries he suffered in the last Naadam. Before they were wed, it was with some hesitation that he sought the most radiant's blessing, but to his surprise Magnai betrayed no sign of anger or resentment. Nevertheless, Baatu prays daily that their leader might one day know his happiness.

THE DOTHARL TRIBE

One would do well to give this tribe a wide berth, for their reputation as a violent, warlike people is well deserved. At present, they claim the northern edge of Nhaama's Retreat as their domain, and reside near an oasis from which they venture out to hunt and to graze their herds.

History

The Dotharl are perhaps the only tribe that can currently contend with the Oronir, for their ferocity and martial prowess are second to none. Their bloodlust is born of a belief that the soul of one who dies valiantly in battle burns bright, thus ensuring their eventual rebirth. As such, they do not fear death, but rather seek out opportunities for a glorious end. Unsurprisingly, their warriors tend not to live to old age, and in recent years their diminished population has suffered repeated defeats at the hands of the Oronir in the Naadam.

A fallen warrior is believed to be reincarnated within a year of their death, and so after a child is born, the tribe's leader looks into their eyes to ascertain the soul's identity, that they might return to them their name. During periods when newborns are few in number, however, some say that a Dotharli soul may come to reside in the body of another Xaela tribesman.

Sadu of the Dotharl

"With death a warrior must dance boldly. Fearlessly.
For thus does his soul burn bright."

The khatun of the Dotharl, Sadu is a fervent devotee of her tribe's traditions, and so does not hesitate to lead them into battle—even if at a tremendous disadvantage—with utter disregard for her own well-being. When not slaughtering her enemies on the field, the woman of twenty-seven summers looks after her people with surprising care and concern. She is quick to assess difficult situations and deliver pragmatic commands, and this same sound judgment serves her well when searching the eyes of newborns to identify the old souls within.

Some might describe her as a fierce yet enigmatic figure, who if spied at a distance on a crisp moonlit night, as the soft notes of a morin khuur float on the wind, against the backdrop of a thousand thousand twinkling stars...one's heart might just skip a beat. Yet one would be wise to tread with caution, for Sadu Heavensflame loves little else other than red meat and war, and will not suffer arrogant men.

The Shattered Star

Sadu's weapon of choice, its crown is said to have been fashioned from a fragment of a fallen star by her incarnation three generations ago. Even now it retains a measure of divinity, and any who would dare wield it must be possessed of extraordinary strength to bend its magicks to her will.

Mauci of the Dotharl

"I shall train like never before.
It is up to me to do this new name justice."

Mauci of the Seven and Seven Swords, as he was known in a past life, was renowned for his skill with a blade. When reborn, he tried desperately to hone his skills and live up to his past reputation, but after much struggle began to question if he was truly the reincarnation of the famed warrior. With the assistance of his friend Khulan and a foreign traveler, he discovered that he was far better suited to fighting with his fists than a sword. Mustering his courage, he declared this to one and all...only to find that they were more than willing to accept him as he was, for past Maucis had been known for a variety of weapons and monikers.

Koko of the Dotharl

"The soul is the soul,
and the flesh the flesh."

To the Dotharl, the body is but a vessel for the soul and is not indicative of one's true nature. Women may be reborn as men, and vice versa, as was the case for Sadu, who for several incarnations was born a male. Koko understands this well, having returned in the vessel of man after dying as a woman. Yet while such simple concepts are easily understood by all Dotharl, it being a frequent occurrence, Koko has had to explain it many times to foreign travelers, who often struggle to understand.

Koko's current vessel has seen twenty-five summers and has a knack for eating large quantities of food quickly. He is also quite proud of his hair, which he styles in a manner he supposedly once found attractive in his previous life.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STEPPE

While there are few tribes which wield as much influence as the Oronir and Dotharl, the Azim Steppe is home to countless people with unique traditions that set them apart from one another.

Iturgen of the Qestir

"..."

Khan of the Qestir, a tribe known for a shared vow of silence, Iturgen is a dignified and decisive leader who presides over the affairs of Reunion, the great marketplace of the Steppe. He and his tribe endeavor to keep the peace by keeping an eye out for unscrupulous traders who would deceive their customers. However, like all Qestir, the khan of forty summers trusts only in actions and not words, and so is reticent to expel individuals from Reunion without incontrovertible evidence, for testimony alone is unreliable. It is whispered that he can fight with any weapon—the blade, the spear, the bow, and even his bare fists—and that if he were to lead his tribe in the Naadam, the Qestir might well rule the Steppe. However, he is rather more fond of fresh dzo buuz than bloodshed.

Daidukul of the Buduga

"The Buduga will stand with the Oronir, and victory will be ours, as before."

The thirty-four year old khan of the Buduga, who liken themselves to the spear of Nhaama—indomitable and resolute. The tribe values strength of body above all else, and since male Xaela tend to be noticeably taller and more robust than their female counterparts, the all-male Buduga would capitalize on this difference. Unwavering loyalty is another trait prized by these warriors, even to allied tribes, for such arrangements are key to their survival as they can only bolster their ranks by accepting orphaned children or claiming tribute from defeated enemies.

In pursuit of his mantra—"All glory to the tribe"—Daidukul entered into a pact with the Oronir shortly after becoming khan, believing that an alliance with the preeminent tribe would see their numbers swell. Whenever prisoners are brought before the most radiant brother, Daidukul is wont to take their measure—and if pleased by what he sees, seek to claim them as his own.

Cotota of the Qestir

"...?"

Niece of Iturgen Khan, she is charged with deciding which merchants are permitted to sell their wares in Reunion. Though men of many tribes adore her silent beauty and have sought to woo her with flowery words, all have failed, for the youth of twenty-four summers is more than willing to wait for a suitor willing to pledge a substantial herd of lamb for her hand.

Jebei of the Gesi

"We Gesi are skilled hunters; certainly the most capable of all the Xaela tribes. We fully understand the importance of weaponry..."

Though the Gesi pride themselves on their mastery of the slingspear, Jebei had aspirations of leading his tribe to greater glory by acquiring more powerful weapons. To that end, the youth of twenty and five summers attempted to deceive an Ul'dahn merchant and steal his wares, but through the timely intervention of another foreign traveler, Jebei's plot was foiled, and he was exiled from Reunion.

Ibakha of the Uyagir

"We cannot allow ourselves to be overcome by greed as our sinful ancestors were."

An udgan of the Uyagir, a tribe which lives in the caves north of Nhaama's Retreat. She and her brethren endeavor to live a frugal life, away from the trappings of luxury. Though she has only seen thirty-two summers, Ibakha's ability to see one's future is already known far and wide. However, those who seek knowledge of their past, such as the Dotharl, will find that she is unable to help.

Gascot Brooke

"I am ever the optimist, but even I would struggle to say that went according to plan..."

A merchant of thirty-two summers in the employ of the East Aldenard Trading Company, Gascot previously worked at the Kugane branch, until Hancock dispatched him to the Azim Steppe that he might develop ties with local merchants in Reunion. Though he struggled at first due to his ignorance of Qestiri customs, with the aid of a fellow traveler he eventually reached an understanding with the tribe, and received permission to operate in the markets.

THE DATAQ AND GORO TRIBES

Owing to their nomadic lifestyles, some tribes of the Azim Steppe are rarely encountered by outsiders, and thus little is known of them. Should a traveler chance to cross paths with one such tribe, they would do well to avail themselves of this rare opportunity to learn more of their ways.

History

As two of the smaller tribes to roam the Steppe, the Dataq and Goro rarely take part in the Naadam and so wield little influence. Nevertheless, their unique customs warrant attention.

The Dataq, for one, are arguably the tribe most committed to a nomadic lifestyle, refusing to remain in one place longer than several bells. To this end, they will even sleep in the saddle, and only utilize their tents for shelter when caught in torrential rains. The khan himself, however, would be the first to admit that this is less a hard rule and more an ideal for which they strive, even if they do indeed travel further and longer than any other tribe.

The Goro, on the other hand, are regarded with confusion by some outsiders owing to their belief that the horse is the perfect being, as well as the fact that when a Goro comes of age they are "wed" to a horse of the opposite sex (though for reproductive purposes other partners are chosen by lots). It should be noted that because a horse's lifespan is far shorter than that of a Xaela's, one is likely to be wed to several horses over the course of his or her life.

Khalja of the Dataq

"The Steppe is full of enemies. This is why we must embrace newfound friends."

The forty-seven-year-old khan of the Dataq was blessed with his parents' foresight and further honed his survival instincts through decades spent in the saddle. On the exceedingly rare occasion he knows not the best course of action, he consults his shagai—dice fashioned from the bones of livestock. In this way, he can hearken to the whispers of the old gods, much like the Mol through their udgan. A peerless horseman skilled with both blade and bow, he can act as both hunter and warrior as circumstances require, and is admired by all as a consummate leader.

Sokhatai of the Dataq

"No more blood need be spilled this day!"

The niece of the khan is regarded by his children as an older sibling, owing to their close relationship. Tragically, her parents and husband were claimed by a sickness, and for a long time she nursed an all-consuming sadness. However, in her endless travels with her tribe, she has slowly come to terms with her loss, and has begun to look to the future with hope once more.

Owing to her mother's Qalli heritage, the woman of twenty-eight summers is a talented singer and poet—so much so that Altani cannot help but steal glances at her whenever possible. She also enjoys cooking, and is quite proud of her khorkhog recipe.

Anarba of the Dataq

"A bowl of hot khorkhog is reward enough for the day's hunt!"

The khan's son of three and twenty years is, in sharp contrast to his cool-headed father, emotional and reckless. When the tribe crossed paths with Gurbesu in their travels, it was the first time Anarba had met a woman his age not of the Dataq. He quickly grew infatuated with her, and was heartbroken when they had to bid farewell to one another.

Altani of the Dataq

"Barely enough to boil a goat's head. But it will have to do."

The daughter of the khan spent her childhood in the company of horses and sheep, and so developed a love of animals. Despite her young age of seventeen, she is as skilled as any adult when it comes to milking, shearing, and felting, and is no stranger to the sight of blood. Adept with a spear, she will stand and fight to protect the tribe's herds if need be.

Gurbesu of the Goro

"I am the cause of this destruction."

A young woman of twenty summers, Gurbesu was injured in a skirmish with the Matanga and separated from her tribe, only to be later saved by the Dataq. She traveled with the tribe for a time, searching for her people, and was fortunate to find them in time to join them in time to confront the Matanga and their almighty regent, Anjana, in one of the greatest battles the Steppe had seen in recent memory.

Bayan of the Goro

"Neigh!"

Husband of Gurbesu, to whom he was wed upon her coming of age. According to his wife, Bayan is a quiet, mild-mannered gentleman, whose only failing is perhaps his competitive streak. Regardless, she loves her four-year-old husband very, very much.

THE M TRIBE

Calling the Fringes its home since eras past, the M tribe played a vital role in the struggle for Ala Mhigo's liberation. That the tribe has survived to this day is in no small part due to the efforts and sacrifices of its members, be they great or small.

History

During the Age of Endless Frost, a great migratory wave saw tribes of Miqo'te cross the frozen seas to Eorzea. Following the Velodyna River northward, they finally arrived in the region now known as Gyr Abania. As the ice melted, giving way to the Fifth Astral Era, the majority of these tribes spread across the realm, but the J and M peoples alone elected to remain, the former settling in the Peaks while the latter claimed the Fringes for its hunting grounds.

Since that time, the M tribe has lived quietly in its domain east of the Velodyna, untouched by the changes that unfolded around them. They watched from afar as the city-state of Skalla rose and fell in the neighboring Lochs, and survived the floods of the Sixth Umbral Calamity and all that followed. Though they occasionally entered into alliances with other races, ever did they preserve their distinct identity and their crag-top home.

However, the tribe's resilience would be sorely tested under imperial rule. Rendered unwelcome in their own territory, it was all they could do to eke out a living. To limit the mouths that wanted for feeding, they took the drastic action of shedding their second nunh, but this was no permanent solution to their hardships. Thus did they join hands with the Ala Mhigan Resistance, that they might reclaim the freedom to simply live their lives.

M'rahz Nunh

"There was a time when I was the weakest of the males in the M tribe. It wasn't easy, but through rigorous training, I eventually grew to become the man you see before you.."

M'rahz was only three and twenty when he bested his predecessor in a duel and replaced him as nunh, a breeding male. While that was an impressive feat in its own right, the Seeker of the Sun would be the first to acknowledge that the harder part was still to come. In the early days, it seemed as though he could please none of the womenfolk, but pain proved an effective teacher and he quickly honed his sensitivity to the needs of others.

Over the next twenty-seven years, he has protected his people as both a husband and a father. A challenging task at the best of times, it was only made more difficult when the Empire invaded two decades ago. With their hunting grounds shrinking and food growing scarcer by the season, many hard decisions had to be made. And the hardest one of all was that which saw his dear friend and fellow nunh, M'aht, leave the village behind. Owing to their history, he harbors a fondness for M'zhet, M'aht's spirited son.

M'hahtoa Lhan

"Come, come, eat your fill of our food, and drink deep of our spirits. There is more than enough for all."

According to her daughter M'naago, M'hahtoa is the true leader of the M tribe. A willing listener and an accomplished cook, the forty-two-year-old welcomes those with troubles to unburden their minds and fill their bellies at her hearth, and thus sees their worries vanish alongside their hunger. That the members of the tribe, strong-minded folk by nature, are able to rally under one nunh is in no small part due to her comforting presence.

Aside from her skills at the cookfire, the Seeker of the Sun is also a peerless huntress, and hers was the hand that trained M'naago in the bow. In her spare moments, she can be seen crafting arrowheads, but one is advised not to disturb her as she works.

M'zhet Tia

"Is that the sound of damsels in distress? Fear not! Your cries of despair will not go unanswered! For the future nunh of the M tribe, M'zhet Tia, has arrived!"

M'zhet is the son of M'aht, a former nunh of the M tribe. Before he had seen but six summers, he left the Peering Stones with his father, who had volunteered to cast aside his title. The decision was prompted by their dwindling hunting grounds—the consequence of imperial rule—but these facts were not known to the young cub. His father would later be slain protecting their village, leaving him an orphan. And though he survived on his own, bereft of a guiding presence, he grew up naïve in the ways of the world, particularly with regards to the women of his tribe—an unfortunate failing for one who longs for family and aspires to become a nunh.

Now five and twenty, the Seeker of the Sun is in the prime of his years, with a resilience to survive even grenado blasts (albeit with some powder removed), but only time will tell if he will realize his dream of establishing his own harem.

M'aht Nunh

"My path may take me to the ends of the world, but my heart shall ever be here."

Together with his fellow nunh, M'rahz, this Seeker of the Sun once led the people of the M Tribe. When necessity forced them to revert to single-nunh rule, rather than face his friend in a duel as tradition dictates, he relinquished his title and left the village. He took with him his beloved son, M'zhet, and the two lived in isolation in the mountains of the Fringes. Yet M'aht never forgot his people, and he continued watching over them from afar.

In the course of his vigil, he caught wind of a dastardly Qalyana plot to unleash frenzied beasts upon his village. Facing the creatures alone, he succeeded in herding them inside a cave, but he could not avoid the baneful touch of their petrifying poison. With the last of his strength, he entombed the beasts in stone before turning into stone himself. He was but twenty-five.

THE FACES OF GYR ABANIA

The struggle for Ala Mhigo's liberation unfolded in the region of Gyr Abania. As they journeyed through its war-ravaged landscape, the Warrior of Light and his comrades would cross paths with countless souls, each with a different tale to tell.

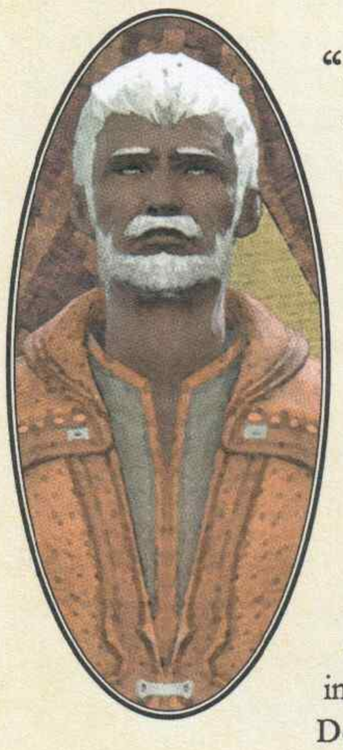
Tahla Molkoh

"I cannot offer much in the way of combat, but if you should have any inquiries regarding historical matters, you need only ask!"

Since an early age, Tahla has harbored a love of letters, and upon hearing that the Order of the Twin Adder had need of recordkeeping, she jumped at the chance to serve her nation. While her physical strength did not quite pass muster, the Keeper of the Moon impressed with her vast knowledge of military history. Thus was she accepted into the ranks and given charge of the military records unit—a tiny crew comprising herself as the sole officer and three assistants.

Although Tahla's role excuses her from most training and combat, owing to her unit's low profile even amongst company members, her comrades have taken to calling her the "Invisible Adder." Yet far from taking offense at the name, as someone with a penchant for bestowing epithets herself, the twenty-four-year-old lieutenant has embraced it wholly.

Raganfrid Bleaker



"Bones heal, scars fade, but the dead remain dead. We're alive, and that's more than can be said for only the gods know how many others."

Raganfrid is the elder of Ala Gannha, a village situated in the Peaks that once prospered by virtue of its quarry. Born and bred in the village, he naturally took up the stonecutter's trade, and was known for his incomparably precise work. Alas, the Garlean invasion saw the demand for stone dry up fairly overnight, and not even his skills could spare him a fate of idleness. To add insult to injury, the village was subjected to heavy taxes, and it was all that the inhabitants could do to scratch out a living.

Despising the Empire for taking away their livelihood, the sixty-one-year-old Highlander has long been a staunch supporter of the Ala Mhigan Resistance. He grew up close to Curtis Hext, Lyse's father and hero of the revolution, with whom he is said to have traded both banter and blows.

Stark Woad

"Ambushing the occasional imperial patrol won't change a damn thing. Infiltrating their castrums and learning their secrets, on the other hand..."

A covert operative of the Immortal Flames, the thirty-four-year-old Hellsguard originally hails from the Peaks. At the age of fifteen, she set off from her home with her father, and they, like so many other refugees, eventually drifted to Ul'dah. Years later, upon learning that her famous compatriot Raubahn Aldynn had assumed command of the sultanate's newly founded Grand Company, she was inspired to do her part and enlisted. She was handpicked for an elite unit under Marshal Pipin Tarupin's command, through whose operations she made her long-awaited return to the land of her birth.

Posing as a migrant to Radiata, she secured a job as a kitchen hand within Castrum Abania, and there she learned to peel popotoes at blistering speed while keeping her ears perked. The intelligence she acquired would prove to be of immeasurable value to the liberation effort.

J'dyalani Abah

"Travelers come and go from Ala Ghiri quite often, but should they wish to stay, who they were before coming here doesn't matter."

Born in Ala Ghiri as the only daughter of an inn proprietress, J'dyalani lost her nunh father in battle when the Garleans invaded. Tragically, her mother would also be taken away from her, murdered by an imperial soldier during the subsequent occupation. Yet the Seeker of the Sun forged on, continuing her mother's legacy with the inn and resolutely enduring the hardship and humiliation of imperial rule. The experience imbued J'dyalani with uncommon tenacity which, together with the leadership and openness she inherited from her father and mother respectively, made her a leader figure in Ala Ghiri.

Following the liberation of the village, she labored to save the imperial soldier Baut, who showed her people respect and kindness when his cohorts did not. A relationship would blossom between the two...but if the gossip is to be believed, the twenty-eight-year-old woman had not quite envisioned a future with a once-married man of a different race.

Sayer Crowne

"Even the hardest of rocks will break if you keep chiselin' away at it—life's the same!"

An elderly stonecutter of Ala Gannha, Sayer made it his mission to revive his village's floundering industry, but no amount of impassioned words could rekindle the people's spirits. Yet if the old Highlander's seventy-seven summers have taught him anything, it is that one mustn't give up. And with a little help from an adventurer, he was able to extract the secrets hidden in an old work song, which pointed the way to a vein of precious stone.

Baut Hjorn

"The suffering of these people only served to remind me of my loss, so I put an end to it. Simple as that."

A native of an Ilsabardian province, Baut enlisted in the army in order to earn citizenship for his family. The Hyuran centurion was posted to Gyr Abania and given command of the garrison at Ala Ghiri, and there he watched as the forces of the Eorzean Alliance encroached. Deeming their cause lost, the thirty-eight-year-old surrendered himself in exchange for his men's freedom, a decision that led to the bloodless liberation of the village.

Sarisha

"The Lady of Bliss embodies freedom—that which the imperials would take from us. As her children, there is but one path: to fight, and to fight, and to fight."

Broodmother of the Vira, a splinter faction of the Qalyana. Together with other Ananta who opposed the summoning of Sri Lakshmi, the thirty-nine-year-old founded a settlement called Vira Nilya. Yet far from shunning their goddess, they desired to honor Her most purely. For the Vira believe that the Lady of Bliss extols freedom above all other virtues, and it was likewise in Her name that they chose to stand with the Ala Mhigan Resistance against the Empire.

Shanti

"We wish only to live in peace, and if this be the price we must pay, then so be it!"

The Qalyana broodmother's descent into madness began when her only daughter, given over to the Crania Lupi as a hostage, was slain. Desperate to bring back her precious Anamika, Shanti resorted to summoning Sri Lakshmi and was made one of Her thralls. The thirty-six-year-old plotted to call forth her goddess once more at the council of representatives in Ala Mhigo, and while she succeeded in doing so, she was summarily cut down by Raubahn Aldynn.

Anamika

"..."

Daughter to Shanti, the Qalyana broodmother, Anamika was taken as a hostage by Fordola to guarantee the Ananta's good behavior. Her tragic death at the hands of the Crania Lupi served as the catalyst for the summoning of Lakshmi. While her flesh was made whole once more by the Lady of Bliss, the flame that was her soul had been forever extinguished, and naught remains of the girl of thirteen but an empty husk.

Berehta Corder

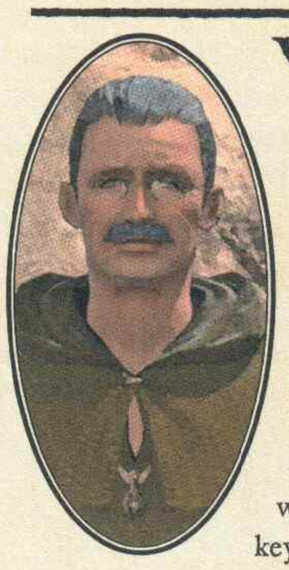
"I'm not sure how much more adventure my heart can take. Is it always so dangerous out here?"

A farmer of Coldhearth, Berehta wed her childhood sweetheart in the hamlet and came to carry his child. Alas, her husband never had the chance to behold his son, for he died fighting the Empire, and the Highlander woman was left to raise the child alone. Supported by those around her, she saw the boy grow into a good-natured young man, but he too was taken from her. At the age of forty-two, Berehta would learn of her son's death as a proud soldier of the Ala Mhigan Resistance.

Erart Corder

"I've cut down more than my fair share of friends and countrymen, convincing myself it was for the greater good."

Berehta's only son, Erart disappeared from his hamlet while trying to escape imperial conscription. His path led him to the Ala Mhigan Resistance, where he came to work as a covert operative. The twenty-year-old Highlander was given the dangerous mission of infiltrating the Crania Lupi, and in order to maintain his façade, he was forced to commit unspeakable deeds. Believing himself beyond forgiveness, he resolved to leave everything behind and feigned his own death.



Watt Grayler

"What manner of mischief brings you young'uns to old Watt this time, eh?"

Scarcely slowed down by his sixty-eight winters, Watt spearheads the effort to rejuvenate the Saltery. Being an enterprising sort and possessing a rebellious streak, the Highlander trafficked in fresh water during King Theodoric's brutal reign, accessing the underground supply with a guardsman's key he had copied. Years later, this key would be passed on to his grandson, Wiscar, to be used by the Resistance in its storming of the Ala Mhigan Quarter.

Tibost Stonethumb

"Fordola ain't forgiven—not by a damn sight—but we've better things to do than spill new blood for old wrongs."

A carpenter of forty-five years who lives in the Ala Mhigan Quarter, Tibost had borne witness to countless atrocities committed under imperial rule. Stoked by the euphoria of victory, the Highlander's seething hatred for the Empire boiled over, and his was amongst the loudest voices demanding Fordola's head. After being saved at the council of representatives, however, he underwent a change of heart, deciding to focus his energies instead on revitalizing local industry.

Bertliana Hawkins

"I will not take my new life in Ala Mhigo for granted. It is a gift that Wilred never got to receive."

Born to refugees in Little Ala Mhigo, Bertliana had never beheld her homeland in all her eighteen summers. When the opportunity arose for the displaced to return to Ala Mhigo, the young Highlander was given charge of the first group to set forth. Though she naturally longed to see the home she had only heard about in tales, she made the journey, above all, for her childhood friend Wilred. He, more than anyone, burned with the desire to take back Ala Mhigo, and in order to honor his memory, she took his blade with her and laid it at the Tomb of the Errant Sword.

THE IMPERIAL GARLEAN ARMY

For long years, the Imperial Garlean Army had held the lands of Gyr Abania and Yanxia within its vicelike grip. Along the arduous road to freedom, the would-be liberators would encounter the implacable agents of this machine of conquest.

History

While each of the imperial army's fourteen legions is formidable by any reckoning, the XIIth stands apart from them all. Commanded by none other than the crown prince Zenos yae Galvus, it is the occupying force of two distant lands, Gyr Abania in the west and Yanxia in the east.

Seventeen summers following Doma's annexation, its governance was entrusted to the VIth Legion, led by Regula van Hydrus. As the mainstay of those forces loyal to Varis, however, the greater part of the legion was recalled to the Garlean motherland when the high legatus sensed a war of succession might soon erupt. Seeking to exploit the Empire's fraying unity, it was at this juncture that Lord Kaien chose to mount his rebellion. In response, Varis sent the XIIth Legion, which crushed the rebels as quickly as they had risen. Thereafter, in order to keep the Domans under heel, Zenos appointed an acting viceroy to impose brutal rule, while he, by his own initiative, moved the bulk of his strength to Ala Mhigo, where a new conflict had begun to stir.

Zenos yae Galvus

"Only man has the wisdom
and the clarity to embrace violence for its own sake."

Emperor Varis's firstborn and heir to the Garlean throne, Zenos was a prodigy who effortlessly excelled in both academic and martial fields. These selfsame gifts, however, consigned him to a life of solitude. Many noble children were brought to be educated beside the prince that they might make loyal companions, but none could match his brilliance. Zenos found his peers tiresome and his elders incompetent, and soon he came to despise them all. Similarly, the pleasures of lesser men held for him no savor, and he cared no more for an opulent feast than had it been ordinary fare.

Amidst the ennui of his existence, there was but one thing that could quicken his pulse—the hunt. A desperate beast holds naught back, and only by meeting its unbridled fury with his own strength could he attain satisfaction. This all-consuming predilection persisted even when he assumed command, and he did not allow something so trivial as duty to obstruct the fulfillment of his craving. The twenty-six-year-old legatus was often seen prowling the battlefield in search of worthy foes, and find the worthiest of foes he eventually did—in the Warrior of Light.

Ame-no-Habakiri

A treasure of the Red Kojin, legend holds that this katana was used by Susano, the Lord of the Revel, to vanquish an evil fiend. By being bathed in the blood of said fiend, the blade came to be steeped in tremendous arcane power.

Fordola rem Lupis

"Everything comes at a price. And if you haven't got the means to pay, then you pay with blood."

Born into a merchant family, Fordola was blessed with loving parents. For their daughter's future, they chose obedience to the Empire, and for their loyalty were granted citizenship and enjoyed a life of comfort. But in the eyes of other Ala Mhigans, many of whom lived in destitution, they were no better than traitors. One day, a rock was thrown, then another. It became a hail, and Fordola's father was killed shielding her. That day, her childhood ended, and she grew up keenly aware of her place.

Disdained by the Garleans and loathed by her countrymen, the Highlander found kindred spirits in other youths of like circumstance, and together they enlisted in the imperial army. They swore that they would do whatever it took to rise high, that all Ala Mhigans might gain acceptance. Save perhaps to remember the taste of her mother's herb-roasted gazelle, the nineteen-year-old has not since looked back.

Yotsuyu goe Brutus

"'Tis better to bend with the wind than stand tall and be broken. Therein lies hope. Therein lies freedom."

Orphaned as a child, Yotsuyu was taken in by her aunt and uncle. However, her adoptive parents little welcomed her then, and they welcomed her even less after the birth of their son, Asahi. Permitted no indulgence, she learned to have no fancies, but she would retain her sweet tooth from better days gone by.

When Doma became an imperial province, the young Hyur briefly attended school, but soon she was instead put to work, performing backbreaking labor with naught but insults as her reward. This life of servitude continued until her brother was accepted into the Magitek Academy, whereupon she was married off to the master of another clan—a man more than twice her age who beat her as he pleased. For good and for ill, he passed away within a few years, and she was sold off to be a courtesan to pay her husband's debts. It was then that she assumed the mantle of an imperial spy and took her life into her own hands. While history will not remember her kindly, it cannot be denied that she fought to the very end of her thirty-two years—that she might be free.

Grynewaht pyr Arvina

"Bwahahahaha!

It's like all my namedays have come at once!"

A native of a province in the mountains of central Ilsabard, Grynewaht enlisted in the imperial army in order to earn citizenship. Initially assigned the defense of Ala Mhigo as part of the XIVth, he saw little actual combat and spent his days in idle tedium. After the Black Wolf was defeated, however, the remnants of his legion were absorbed into the forces of the succeeding XIIth, and the brawny Roegadyn was sent to investigate ancient ruins in the Carteneau Flats at the head of an expendable unit.

An artless brute with a mind only for destruction, Grynewaht is ill suited to tasks requiring any degree of delicacy. At twenty summers, he harbors grand aspirations for promotion, but also lives for the simple things in life, such as tucking into "something tasty" after a hard day's havoc-wreaking.

It bears mentioning that Arvina is a popular imperial surname among those given to the Roegadyn of his homeland, and he is not related to former XIVth Legion praefectus, Rhitahtyn sas Arvina.

Charon

This powerful new weapon was designed by Aulus mal Asina during his days at the Magitek Academy. While its rapid firing rate is unparalleled even amongst imperial artillery, its considerable heft renders it impractical save in the hands of the brawniest soldiers.

Aulus mal Asina

"It was with magitek that we grew strong—that our nation became an empire. Yet ultimately, this was an extrinsic solution to an intrinsic problem."

Aulus was once but one of many faceless researchers at the Magitek Academy. Yet even as the Garlean scientist was officially designing heavy artillery, he was secretly conducting unapproved research with misappropriated funds. In this private project, he sought to imbue pure-blooded Garleans with the ability to manipulate aether, and it was by sheer coincidence that Zenos learned of its existence, during a visit to test the prototype rotary electro-scabbard.

Recognizing the potential of Aulus's research, Zenos took him under his wing and raised him to the rank of "mal," a chief magitek technician. With a vast pool of funds and test subjects at his disposal, Aulus established the Resonatorium and freely indulged his appetite for experiments. At length he succeeded in creating the Resonant, but his experimenting days would come to an end when he recklessly took to battle during the siege of Ala Mhigo and was slain, aged thirty-six.

Asahi sas Brutus

"I should have been the one to govern Doma! I would have repaid his faith!"

Born Asahi Naeuri, this proud young Hyur was adoptive brother to Yotsuyu. Growing up in Doma, he showed great promise in school and was granted the opportunity to study at the Magitek Academy in the Garlean motherland. Upon his graduation, he joined the imperial army, and rose through the ranks by virtue of his prowess as a warrior and diplomat both.

Ardently devoted to Zenos, he would stop at nothing to carry out his lord's wishes, and it is whispered that he even came to harbor an interest in "the hunt." On the occasion he was made ambassador plenipotentiary and charged with negotiating a peace treaty with Doma, he was promoted to the rank of "sas"—the highest achievable by provincial citizens—at but twenty and seven. Yet even as he received this accolade with elation, little did he know that the wheels had been set in motion for his demise.

At the end, he desired only to be remembered by the object of his adoration. But this one little wish, perhaps the humblest amidst a life of avarice and ambition, would go unfulfilled.

Maxima quo Priscus

"The Empire works for the betterment of all. But I see the fear in these peoples' eyes... Mistakes have been made."

Maxima is an officer of the imperial army aligned with the Populares, a collective within Garlemald that campaigns for a shift in provincial policy. Although he is a pure-blooded Garlean, as the son of progressive parents, he was appalled by the treatment of imperial subjects in annexed territories. So it was that he came to dedicate himself to advancing the rights of the provinces—a dangerous proposition in a time when political sway is held by the Optimates, a faction that seeks to consolidate the supremacy of the Garlean race. In truth, Maxima's parents both died under suspicious circumstances, and thus he has forsworn family of his own, that there would be no loved ones to come in harm's way. His spectacles are a memento of his late sire, and an ever-present reminder of the values he holds dear.

Amidst the thirty-four-year-old's ongoing efforts, the newly appointed ambassador, Asahi, emerged as a sympathizer, and he was handpicked for the delegation to Doma.

Grillairmais mal Cinna

"Poison must needs be fought with poison."

Formerly praefectus medicorum—or chief physician—of the XIVth Imperial Legion, Grillairmais was born to a family of Elezen herbalists in an Ilsabardian province. With his vast knowledge of medicinal flora, he became a field medicus upon enlisting in the army, and over the years earned promotions through diligent service. Desiring to distinguish himself further, he embarked upon the development of a chemical weapon. Using the extracts of poisonous plants native to Gyr Abania, he created Black Rose—a lethal concoction that could kill with its fumes alone. To his dismay, however, the weapon was deemed barbaric by Gaius van Baelsar and the plan for mass production was halted.

Years later, the forty-four-year-old Grillairmais would be found bereft of memory, his mind likely ruined by the very substances he created. Regardless, he has been taken into Twin Adder custody and awaits justice for the slaughter of defenseless prisoners in the course of his heinous experiments.

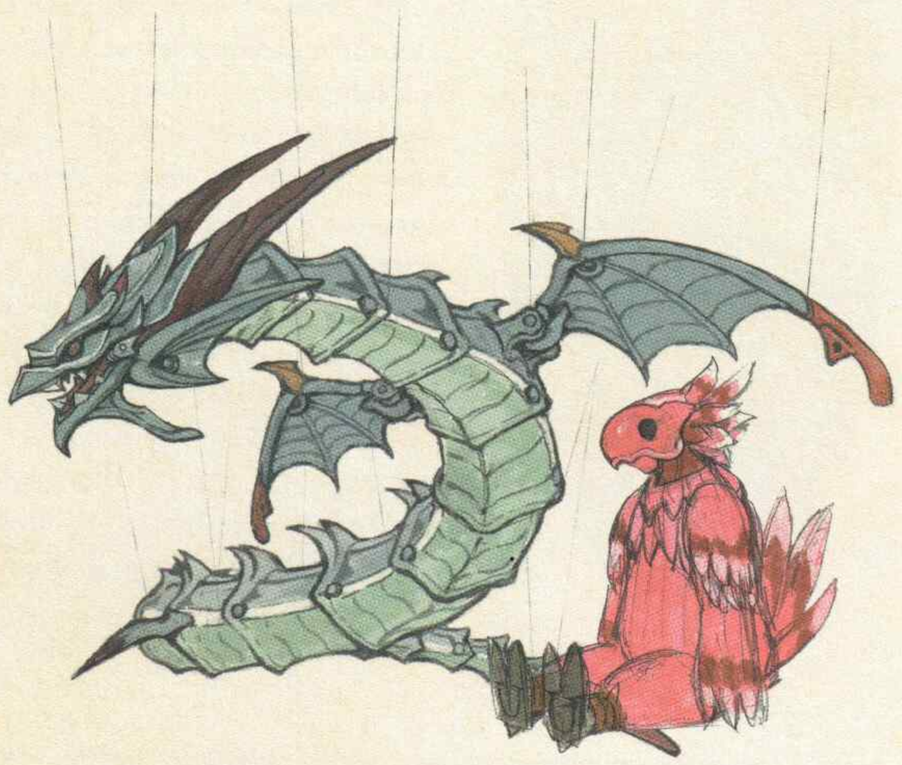
THE MAJESTIC THEATER COMPANY

Choosing exile rather than face the demands of the imperial board of censors, the Majestic Theater Company currently finds themselves guests of the Kugane bakufu, the troupe's massive airship—the *Prima Vista*—floating quietly above the Far Eastern port while Company principal Jenomis cen Lexentale ponders his next destination.

History

Since its foundation more than a decade past, principal Jenomis cen Lexentale has guided the Majestic Theater Company's rise to one of the most renowned acting troupes in Garlemald, if not the entire Three Great Continents. Jenomis's works not only found favor amongst the masses, but from the emperor himself. Before his passing, Solus zos Galvus—known as a patron to the arts—would oft invite the Company to the Imperial Palace and bid them hold private performances. So ardent an admirer was the Emperor, he awarded Jenomis with the Imperial Medal of Culture and ordered an airship be built that citizens in all corners of the Empire might have the chance to experience the Majestic's plays.

The Company's fortunes, however, would change upon the ascendancy of a new emperor—Varis zos Galvus—to the throne. Solus's grandson declared the plays overly critical of the Empire's expansionist policies, and ordered their immediate censorship. Unwilling to comply with these demands, Jenomis was left with but one option: to flee imperial lands before he and his family were imprisoned for treason.



Jenomis cen Lexentale

"And when people see that Ivalice was real,
the rest will fall into place."

Upon graduating from Garlemald's prestigious Magitek Academy, Jenomis turned his talents to writing plays—an endeavor that both filled his coffers and saw his tiny troupe of misfits quickly gain popularity across the empire. Yet despite his plays being much more visible now, the proud playwright continued to incorporate into his works thinly veiled criticism of the emperor and his policies—ideas fostered during his time at the Academy with one Cid Garlond. This refusal to conform would eventually see Jenomis and the entire Majestic Theater Company driven to the far corners of Hydaelyn; though if you ask the principal, he will tell you he has no regrets for his actions. In fact, his self-imposed exile has afforded him the opportunity to pursue another of his passions—research into his family's storied past. Believing himself the descendant of a noble house heretofore only mentioned in faerie tales, the thirty-six-year-old Jenomis now spends his days translating ancient documents and organizing expeditions to remote ruins...much to the chagrin of the displaced actors still in his employ.

The Durai Papers

According to Jenomis, the Durai Papers are a historical record of House Durai—ancestors to the Lexentales—penned by the fabled scholar Orran Durai. This extensive chronicle is said to contain extensive information on the fabled kingdom of Ivalice, as well as an undoctored account of the events that inspired the Zodiac Brave Story. As it is written in script unrecognizable by even Sharlayan's foremost linguistic scholars, however, these claims cannot be verified.

Ramza bas Lexentale

"We may be shunned by the Empire, but we are still Garleans, and we still have our pride."

For most of his sixteen summers, Ramza (named for the young noble who appears alongside King Delita in the Zodiac Brave Story) has lived upon the *Prima Vista*, training to be a performer in his father's private troupe—the Majestic Theater Company. When not practicing diction or dance, the proud Garlean of mixed blood—his mother was Hyuran—assists his father in the principal's research into the Durai Papers and Ivalice. And while sharpness of mind counts amongst his many traits, so, too, does a wicked stubbornness thought to be born from a sense of inadequacy resulting from his lack of a third eye. This inadequacy may also be the driving impetus behind his misguided contempt of non-Garleans.

Alma bas Lexentale

"Nothing I can say will free Ramza and my father from the curse that is our family's legacy."

Jenomis realized that it was more than just chance that saw his second child a girl, and so did not hesitate to name this fated daughter Alma, after Alma Durai, sister of Ramza, true hero of the Zodiac Brave Story.

Content with her life at a boarding school in the capital of Garlemald, Alma's world was thrown into disarray when an unexpected visit from her brother turned into a ten-thousand-malm journey that would end in indefinite exile from the land she called home. Victim to her father's whims, Alma played the obedient daughter, adapting to life on the airship better than anyone could expect, given the circumstances. However, when her father failed to return from a dangerous expedition into the ruins of Rabanastre, Alma could remain silent no longer. She reached out to her father's acquaintance, Cid Garlond, and a foreign reporter stationed in Kugane, to help put an end to the madness which had claimed her family.

Unlike her ambitious father or her controlling brother, Alma maintains an air of rationality that belies her age of fifteen years.

Lina Mewrilah

"If the legend of Ivalice is true, the public has a right to know!"

Reporter for the Gridanian tabloid, *The Raven*, Lina Mewrilah was sent on assignment to the Far East by her editor and sister, Mujih, after a few strong-armed inquiries ran the overcurious Keeper of the Moon afoul of several of the Black Shroud's more upstanding citizens. It was while in Kugane that Lina caught wind of a story brewing aboard the newly arrived Garlean theater barge, the *Prima Vista*. While searching for a way aboard the airship, Lina happened to meet Alma bas Lexentale—who, in a stroke of luck, happened to be searching for someone to aid her in the search for her missing father. Knowing this could be her ticket to journalistic stardom, Lina agreed to not only speak with Lexentale, but also use her clout to enlist the assistance of one of the realm's most renowned heroes—the Warrior of Light.

Mikoto Jinba

"The resultant neuro-harmonic disturbance allows for a highly unique emittance of CPRS waves that, instead of radiating outward with a determinate factor of dispersal, instead resonate inward at a frequency so labored, my estimates place the rate of VRT decay at upwards of several centuries..."

Recognized for her extensive achievements in the field of modern aetherology—achievements that include working with deceased Archon Moenbryda Wilfsunnwyn to develop an aetheric siphon—Mikoto was indoctrinated into the Students of Baldesion at the age of but nine and twenty summers, making her the youngest Au Ra of the Raen clan in recent history to receive the prestigious title of Archon. It was through Garlond Ironworks employee Jessie Jaye that the junior instructor at the Studium came to know Cid, and was asked by the head engineer to assist his companions in their study of auracite.

An unfortunate side effect of her upbringing amongst the scholars of Old Sharlayan, Mikoto is plagued by an unfortunate inability to speak at the level of her audience, a tendency that serves only to sow confusion.

Ba'Gamnan

"Traitors! Have you no pride!? You treat with the very men who laid waste to our homeland!"

Former captain of the Royal Dalmascan Fusiliers, Ba'Gamnan and his elite unit of Bangaa were charged with the protection of the crown prince and princess. When both Rasler and Ashelia B'nargin Dalmasca were slain during the Garlean Empire's assault on Nalbina Fortress, Ba'Gamnan blamed himself, and turned brigand, swearing revenge on those who wronged his king and country. It was this deep-seated hate that ultimately made him susceptible to the alluring whispers of the Duma and saw his transformation into the dragon Yiazmat.

Bwagi

"The boy can call us what he pleases.
For our past failings, we deserve no better."

Loyal to Ba'Gamnan since their days in the royal fusiliers, Bwagi continued as the Bangaa's right hand even after his captain chose to turn bandit following the fall of Rabanastre. His duties mainly consist of ensuring that Gijuk and Rinok remain out of trouble while Ba'Gamnan silently plots their revenge against the Garlean Empire.

Gijuk

"I am not afraid to speak what my brothers are thinking—the captain was a fool to believe that the Duma could bring back our fallen."

Covered from head to toe in the deep bronze scales common amongst those Bangaa of the Faas clan, Gijuk is the smallest of his royal fusilier companions. The talented sharpshooter, however, makes up for his lack in size with a keenness of sight and sharpness of intuition to rival even the greatest of hunters. As such, he is oft tasked with the band's scouting duties.

Rinok

"We Bangaa live long. Any other race would think it a blessing, but to me and mine it is a curse. More summers mean more suffering."

The only female member of Ba'Gamnan's band of rogues and ruffians, many are quick to underestimate the former royal fusilier's skill because of her gender—a misstep that oft tends to be an opponent's last. Rinok also exhibits a high degree of competence in the operation of machina, a skill that sees her in the pilot's chair on those rare occasions when her crew has procured an airship.

Montblanc

"Of course I'm a moogle, kupo. You'd think the adorable wings and the fluffy pom would have given it away."

Eldest of six brothers, Montblanc hails from a tribe of nomadic moogles who make their homes in the deserts of southern Othard and Ilsabard. Once an aspiring adventurer (despite a decided lack of courage or cunning), the eccentric moogle's heart turned after sneaking onto the *Prima Vista* to partake in the Majestic Theater Company's performance of the *Zodiac Brave Story*. Having realized his true calling (namely, singing and dancing), he packed his bags and headed for Kugane, seeking to join the Majestic's hallowed ranks...or die trying.

The Wandering Dramaturge

"There's few so loath to take their rest
Than 'venturers without a quest,
For shorn of work to give them worth,
They soon become a source of mirth."

A self-proclaimed quill-for-hire, this nameless auteur and boon companion to the wandering minstrel has recently taken up residence aboard the *Prima Vista*, where he indulges himself in fine wine and poignant conversation while occasionally providing the Majestic with heavily worded manuscripts. The young-at-heart Midlander of two and fifty summers renounced his carefree life of touring the Empire upon learning that his old schoolmate from the Imperial Magitek Academy—Jenomis—was, for all intents and purposes, defecting from the Empire—an action he, too, had been considering for almost a decade.

FACES FROM JOURNEYS PAST

Adventure is, in a sense, a never-ending series of new encounters. The Warrior of Light and his companions have heretofore crossed paths with countless individuals over the course of their journeys throughout Eorzea and the Far East, some proving to be trustworthy compatriots—others, treacherous knaves.

Ejika Tsunjika

"I was born into poverty. What I have achieved, what I have become—all was through mine own effort."

A Sharlayan youth of twenty-two summers, Ejika devoted himself to his studies that he might overcome his humble origins. His dedication caught the eye of Galuf Baldesion, whose endorsement ensured the boy entered the Studium on scholarship. He received his education at the same time as Krile Baldesion and the Leveilleur twins, for whom he harbored no small resentment.

After graduation, Ejika was approached by numerous organizations, but ultimately chose to cast his lot with the Students of Baldesion, whose eponymous founder he deeply admired. Despite being recognized as an Archon of Sharlayan for his knowledge of destructive magicks and aetherology, he refuses to think of himself as unique or exceptional, and dresses to conceal the Archon brand on his back.

Galuf Baldesion

"Deserted. Dangerous.
The perfect place to build a prison..."

Patriarch of the prestigious House Baldesion, in his youth Galuf yearned to see the wider world, and to that end left the northern seas and traveled distant lands with his three brave companions. The four had many grand adventures, during which they learned of myriad threats to Hydaelyn, including the primals.

These experiences spurred Galuf to use his considerable resources to purchase the deserted Isle of Val off the coast of Sharlayan, where he and his comrades set about building various research facilities, as well as developing an expansive Aethernet. With the recognition and support of the Forum, he went on to found the Students of Baldesion, an organization which has been instrumental in combatting the primal threat.

Galuf's boundless generosity is well known, for he has used his family's wealth to fund orphanages and the educations of promising youths. However, it is also said that he can be strangely–if not conveniently–forgetful at times.

Kageyama Shiratama

"No, I will not stand for this!
I paid for their heads and I shall have them!"

Eldest son and heir to his clan's soy sauce empire, Kageyama left the daily minutiae to his rather more competent younger brother, allowing him to devote his every waking moment to pleasures of the flesh. His hedonistic ways have apparently endeared him to the social elite of Kugane, who flock to the scion of thirty-eight summers' soirées without fail.

In a recent notorious incident, he led a group of insurgent ronin in laying siege to Kugane Castle...though in truth it would seem he had no interest in their cause, and was simply indulging in yet another idle whim. After a group of foreign adventurers brought an end to the insurgents' machinations, Kageyama was detained by the Sekiseigumi, and his fate seemed all but certain. However, after he pleaded that he was an innocent bystander and a victim like the others, the peacekeepers inexplicably released him. The prevailing rumor is that his clan payed an exorbitant sum to a bakufu official to secure his freedom, leaving the prodigal son of the Shiratama to resume his endless pursuit of an extravagant life.

Liliju Liju

"I tire of being constantly coddled."

Traveling writer and Ul'dahn dignitary, the fame of this lady of twenty-five summers is easily eclipsed by that of her uncle, Lord Lolorito Nanarito, chairman of the East Aldenard Trading Company. Born into privilege, she received the finest education gil can buy, and is said to possess an incredible command of foreign languages—a skill befitting a noble lady destined to be wed to an Ul'dahn oligarch. However, when her parents began making arrangements for such a union, the young woman balked at the prospect and quit Ul'dah, preferring to live a life of adventure on the road.

As she journeyed the length and breadth of the realm, Liliju chronicled and published her experiences to much acclaim. Eventually she found her way to Kugane in the Far East, where she attended festivities at Kugane Castle on that fateful day when insurgents seized control of the estate and took many guests hostage—including her. Thankfully, this unfortunate incident did little to deter her from her chosen path, and she intends to continue traveling foreign lands and eating all manner of strange and unusual delicacies, for unlike her uncle, she has no qualms when it comes to food.

Philiot Greystone

"What in blazes? 'Access Restricted'? This isn't good..."

Ashamed for his lack of formal education, this earnest bastard of the Brume sought out every opportunity to gain hands-on experience, and eventually secured employment with Garlond Ironworks. His duties later saw him travel to the Fractal Continuum to investigate a disturbance, where he crossed paths with an Ixali youth, which is perhaps why the engineer of nineteen summers has since taken an interest in their culture, particularly their distinct speech patterns.

Kezul Itzcan

"Our paradise. Ayatlan. Find it in Azys Lla, I did not. But someday I will, together with the Ehcatl Nine!"

This junior member of the Ehcatl Nine stole the collective's airship, the *Dezul Qualan*, and with it flew north towards Azys Lla. Though he was waylaid by sky pirates, he managed to arrive at the Fractal Continuum, that great storehouse of Allagan technological marvels, and there learned the true origins of his people. Upon his return, Chief Sezul Totoloc had him hung upside down from a heavenspillar's bough for ten days as punishment.

Kamaitachi

"No need to chase anyone into the sea or anything silly like that! Eh!?"

The youngest auspice of Reisen Temple, having lived but a mere thousand years, this weasel possesses the power to manipulate wind, and with it he can form sharp blades, as well as propel himself swiftly through the air. Kamaitachi has no love of mortal men, and would rather not enlist their aid in confronting Koryu, and so he was eager to put a certain adventurer's skills to the proof when given the opportunity.

Senri

"I could kill you five times before you hit the ground. But I won't, on account of me being civil. For now."

A cat of sixteen hundred years (give or take a decade), Senri prides herself on her impressive memory, which has led her compatriots to dub her a keeper of knowledge. Though she is somewhat slow to accept newcomers, she gets along famously with Tataru Taru, and the two have a habit of conversing at length about various inconsequential matters—a sight which Soroban has likened to his older aunts chatting at a Kojin feast.

Inugami

"There was a time when I killed men by the hundreds. It was most deliberate."

A soft-spoken canine of fourteen hundred and fifty years, Inugami was once feared by some people of Othard as a god of indiscriminate vengeance, and by others as an arbiter of divine retribution. When asked, he will calmly state that the scores of men he slaughtered were deserving of death for their crimes against nature, which is to say that he would call himself the latter.

Komainu

"Were Koryu to break free, all would fall to ruin."

Although technically a lion, this auspice of nineteen hundred years would liken himself more to a dog, and together with his twin guards Reisen Temple and the sacred crystal within. While both stand their posts at nearly all times, he is technically charged with the temple's defense during the night, whereas his brother is more vigilant during the day.

Furi

"Need a guide? 'Course you do!"

This twelve-hundred-and-fifty-year-old raccoon dog has a knack for showing up at the most unexpected times, much to the chagrin of his fellow auspices. Contrary to what some might assume, it is not supernatural speed nor a preternatural sneaking ability which enables him to do so, but rather an extraordinary transformative power. To wit, he can assume the guise of any living being or inanimate object, no matter the size or complexity. Indeed, he may very well be the tome you are perusing now...

Nue

"If you ever need someone to call lightning down upon your foes and whatnot, I'm your auspice."

According to legend, this auspice has the body of a raccoon dog, the face of a monkey, the limbs of a tiger, and a snake for a tail. Needless to say, this could not be further from the truth, for the fourteen-hundred-year-old Nue is simply a red panda, like several other auspices who guard Reisen Temple—though their powers are quite different. Nue can command both lightning and wind, making him a most formidable foe.

Qitian Dasheng

"Is emptiness form, or form emptiness? Either way, I am still here and hitting you!"

An auspice who has lived some two millennia, Qitian Dasheng is the former disciple of another auspice who created the tamate-bako of geomancy. After his master's death, the monkey took it upon himself to safeguard the relic sequestered deep within the Swallow's Compass, the grand mausoleum of King Ganen. Qitian's name is perhaps more akin to a title, for it can also be translated as, "Great Sage, Heaven's Equal."

Zhloe Aliapoh

"How sweet you all are, always doing whatever you can to keep Zhloe's spirits high!"

This young woman of twenty and one summers struggled to take care of her sister Khloe after their parents perished in the Calamity, and eventually entered into Rowena's service to make ends meet. After five long years, she struck out on her own and started a new venture: Menphina's Arms, a humble orphanage for others like her and her sister.

Through years of hardship, Zhloe developed a taste for week-old pineapple pudding, and credits her habit as the reason for her strong, healthy teeth. Whether there is any merit to her claims is anyone's guess.

Khloe Aliapoh

"Khloe likes listening to stories and then making up her own. Can you tell me some of yours?"

Zhloe's sister yearns to follow in her elder's footsteps, and to that end she earns scrips by helping out "Aunt Rowena." The thirteen-year-old girl also makes up stories to cheer up T'kebbe, a fellow orphan, and relies on adventurers to provide inspiration. Precisely how she has managed to befriend so many is unclear, though there is some speculation she employs advanced techniques she learned from her aforementioned aunt.

T'kebbe Morh

"Sometimes Miss Zhloe forgets to unlock the door, or feed us, but I know that's just because she's busy."

This child of twelve summers came to Idyllshire with her parents, who were both hunter-scholars in pursuit of an elite mark. Alas, one day they ventured beyond the gates of the settlement and never returned, leaving her alone until Zhloe took an interest in her. At first, T'kebbe cried every day for her mother and father, but thanks to her best friend Khloe's endless supply of stories, she has become more cheerful and upbeat.

DISCIPLES OF WAR AND MAGIC: FRIENDS AND FOES

Teachers, rivals, bitter enemies—those who would master the martial and mystical arts are sure to encounter many extraordinary individuals along the way. In this section, we will examine some of the more notable personages associated with the disciplines of magic and warcraft.

Black Lotus

"That's Lotus. Black Lotus."

A Highlander man of indeterminate age who was a surprise entrant to Sultana Nanamo's revival of the storied Ul Cup. His true name and identity shrouded in mystery, he forged an impressive path to the finals by making short work of such formidable foes such as Captain Jenlyns of the Sultansworn and First Sword Mylla of the Gladiators' Guild. His victory streak came to an end, however, in a showdown with the Warrior of Light, forcing him to settle for second place. In the end, he was revealed to be none other than Aldis, the Sword of Nald, a gladiator exiled from Ul'dah when he was implicated in a bout-fixing scandal seven years prior. Pardoned by the sultana for his display of courage and honor, he was at long last able to return home to enjoy a life of fine spirits and finer women, as is his wont.

Frenzya

A sword forged by the hand of the legendary smith Gerolt. Oft referred to as the Crown Jewel of the Coliseum, it was one of the blades presented to the most puissant of gladiatorial champions. It is said that the mere sight is enough to send the most imposing of street toughs fleeing in abject fear.

Adri Westwoode(Theobald)

"Hollow words from someone born to power! You will never understand what it means to be weak! Never!"

One of several men behind the mask of the Griffin, a charismatic Ala Mhigan revolutionary leader. In truth, this Highlander of some thirty-eight summers is a fallen monk who once trained at the Temple of the Fist. An erstwhile prodigy who joined the ranks of the high priests when he was scarcely a man grown, he suffered grievous wounds in an attempt to protect Widargelt, whom he loved as a brother, amidst the fiery havoc wreaked by the mad king Theodoric. Though his life was saved, his chakra were irreparably damaged, leaving him a shell of his former self. So it was that he came to harbor an all-consuming obsession for power and a smoldering resentment for all those who were born to it.

Dorgono of the Qerel

"The will of Karash burns brightly within me. Too brightly."

A fetching young Xaela of eighteen summers, she was consumed by violent impulses while on a hunt that was to serve as her rite of passage. Exiled from her clan as one of the reviled Taken, she then drifted aimlessly across the realm, eventually washing up in the port town of Limsa Lominsa, where she soon found herself besmitten with the strapping and virile Curious Gorge. Under the guidance of a kind adventurer, she ultimately learned to control the beast within, and made a triumphant return home to the Azim Steppe, only to face the tragic truth—the Qerel were no more, overrun by the brutal Chaghan, a clan of exiles who believed their blind fury to be a gift from the Dusk Mother herself. With the help of her adventurer friend, she eventually succeeded in driving off the Chaghan and was eventually united with the Roegadyn of her dreams.

Orn Khai

"Now, now, little ones.
There is plenty of me to go around."

The proud son of the mighty Vedrfolnir the White, this dragonet of indeterminate age joined the Azure Dragoon and set off on a quest to find Faunehm, his father's consort, who vanished into the eastern skies some one thousand years ago. On the vast steppe of the Far East, he found Faunehm in the throes of madness, but with a mighty roar from the depths of his soul, he summoned his father, who restored to her her sanity. Familial bonds rekindled, he at last understood why he had been given a name meaning "one born of sadness."

Nourval Lhorulgois

"Why!? Why do you not understand!? Why do you not see the Ala Mhigans for the filth they are!?"

A Wildwood Elezen of thirty-four summers, he is descended from Lord Vainchelon, a legendary Gridanian general and hero who perished in the Autumn War. Though the histories state that Lord Vainchelon succumbed to illness, his family believes the truth is different—that their esteemed ancestor was poisoned by the Ala Mhigans during the peace negotiations. Vehemently opposed to reconciliation with the people he considers his archenemies, he gathered a group of similar-minded individuals and rose up in revolt.

Hanzo the Hidden

"Your very existence brings dishonor to every true shinobi who has ever lived."

A Hyur but shy of thirty summers with a fondness for traditional Hingan poetry, Hanzo was born to the Kagekakushi, an ancient ninja clan that achieved great renown for their exploits during the Age of Blood. Having displayed precocious talent in ninjutsu from his earliest years, he was named Hanzo the Twelfth—assuming the traditional moniker passed down among the leaders of his clan—despite his young age. Seeking to exact revenge on the line of the warlord who razed his ancestral village, he devised a plan to retrieve two scrolls housing a forbidden mudra—scrolls that were carried away to Doma long ago by the deserter Sasuke. He nearly succeeded in his dastardly scheme, but in the end was outwitted by his quondam accomplice Karasu—a descendant of Sasuke—and an adventurer comrade, and died in dishonor on the battlefield.

The Forbidden Mudra of Summoning

A mudra of unspeakable power fashioned by Hanzo the First of the Kagekakushi clan, it was entrusted to the young Sasuke, Master Hanzo's foremost apprentice, with orders to use it to liberate the Doman people. After it served this end, the knowledge was deemed too dangerous, and the scroll was split in two and sealed away far from the eyes of men.

Sylphie Webb

"Never have I heard the voices of the elementals so clearly before. They want to tell me something, I just know it!"

A kind-hearted Midlander child of fourteen summers whose natural talents have earned her a place in the Conjurers' Guild despite her young age—though her stubborn nature has been known to vex Brother E-Sumi-Yan from time to time. It was she who sensed the disturbance in the Twelveswood that led to the discovery of Gatty, a Padjal who had been living in hiding with her mother in the borderland forests. Having lost her own mother at a young age, Sylphie "Sweetwind" was moved deeply by the bond between parent and child, resolving to find a way to keep the two together, even if it meant disobeying the letter of the law. In the end, with the assistance of a kindly adventurer, she was able to find a way to save Gatty from her plight.

Gatty Orwell

"I... I'm in control now. Thank you..."

Though it is the rarest of occurrences, among certain Midlander family lines in Gridania, children are known to be born with curious horns atop their head. Called the Padjal, they are tasked with serving as mediators between the elementals and those who would call the forest home. To that end, they are separated from their families and placed in the ward of the Conjurers' Guild for tutelage. A Padjali girl twelve years of age, Gatty lives in the East End with her mother Sanche, who chose to go into hiding rather than relinquish her daughter as tradition would dictate. Unfortunately, the girl grew increasingly unable to control the powerful magic welling up from within her, causing mother and child alike no end of suffering. Just when it seemed hope was lost, she was fortunate to encounter an adventurer and the young conjurer Sylphie.

Shatotto Shato

"Now that we've gotten the pleasantries out of the way, what do you say we have a little fun? Prepare to be blasted into a kazillion itty-bitty pieces!"

The legendary archmage Shatotto, a Mhachi Lalafell with a penchant for destruction and an intense hatred of hats, was born in the Fifth Astral Era (ca. 800) in the fabled city of Mhach. Driven to seek the ultimate in destructive power, she founded the art that came to be known as black magic, subsequently using her prodigious powers to smash a comet that threatened to destroy her nation into seemingly harmless fragments. She passed at the age of seventy-five, but not before sealing away a copy of her memories—as by her own calculations, a fragment of the comet would return to threaten Hydaelyn once more. So it was that she borrowed the body of the black mage Lalai and returned over two millennia later to save the world from calamity once more.

Gems and Soulstones

When Shatotto summoned her vast destructive powers to shatter the comet, its fragments hurtled down, embedding themselves in the earth across all corners of Eorzea. Brimming with mystical energies, they afforded the mages of the realm untold powers, and were employed as "soulstones" for golems and in the crafting of enchanted items and arms, including the legendary Stardust Rod.

Principia

"Principia, at your service. I am a humble familiar, humbly familiar with the doctrine of summoning."

A familiar in the form of a grimoire fashioned by Sari, a master summoner in the latter years of the Allagan Empire. The art of summoning is something of a contradiction—developed to counter the primals, it is doomed to die out with them, as without primals, new egi cannot be harnessed. So it was that this sentient encyclopædia of summoning knowledge was created to pass down the art to posterity. After being unearthed by the Sons of Saint Coinach, Principia was handed over to Y'mhitra, the foremost researcher in the field. Upon encountering an adventurer who was the preeminent summoner of this era, it sought to impart ancient secrets, unwittingly triggering a fierce battle with fearsome remnants of the past.

Sari of the First Ring

"Ah, the 'potential' has arrived.
Shall we test the limits of your power?"

A Hyur of Allagan descent hailing from the frontier city of Madain, this master summoner was one of the founders of his art. Known for devoting his life to the destruction of primals, he also had a great passion for promulgating his knowledge, taking on many students throughout his sixty-eight years and creating the compendium known as Principia so that the secrets of summoning would not be lost to time. Sadly, the art fell sharply out of favor in the twilight of the Third Astral Era, and many a summoner suffered persecution or death. Driven to the depths of despair by the loss of his disciples, he employed advanced technology to create a defense mechanism he called an "evocation matrix," sacrificing himself to collect the aether necessary to power it. And so it was born—a frightful summoning machine that was both his greatest masterpiece and his tomb.

Setoto Seto

"Indeed! I, too, noticed that my skin once again glows a healthy shade of green!"

Born as a Plainsfolk in the Fifth Astral Era, Setoto hails from the seaside nation of Nym, where she spent many an idyllic day cooking, weaving, and lamenting her unluckiness in love. One tragic day, she was stricken with the Green Death, spurring her scholar father to make a dangerous trek to the enemy nation of Amdapor in search of a cure—a journey from which he never returned. Roused from slumber over fifteen centuries later, she set out to find a memento of her father. With the aid of a generous adventurer and the marauder Alka Zolka, she succeeded in finding his soulstone, only to fail in summoning the faerie Lilac, expending all her aether in the process and falling into a state of unconsciousness. In the end, she was saved from death, thanks in no small part to the combined efforts of the Royal Marines, Landenel, and his men.

Lilac

A faerie that served Setoto's family for generations. Summoned from her father's soul crystal in an imperfect state, it experienced uncontrollable fits of the mind. In truth, Lilac was enduring intense pain and suffering to guide Setoto's adventurer friend to the hidden treasure that might bring succor to the girl and others who suffered her plight.

Myste

"It is not death itself we fear, but the unfinished story. The promise of what could have been."

His hair, his eyes...none of it is his own. He is imperfect...a failure...a misbegotten runt... And yet, is he not someone's special someone? A young boy the dark knights encounter in Ishgard, his only wish is to ease the suffering of others—a wish born of profound regret. He only wanted to protect them...to save them somehow... But there is nothing more to be said of this child. The world is not so kind, so gentle a place that such naive wishes are granted. Yet perhaps it was not all in vain—for even today, might another not yet be saved by someone following in his footsteps?

Ser Muscadain de Citenrond

"The chosen few? An accident of birth allowed us the privilege to fight for our nation, and I for one welcome our new comrades-in-arms."

This Elezen noble of twenty years has always believed that the highborn had a duty to protect and lead the commonfolk, a belief that brought him into conflict with his father, who thought nothing of subjugating and exploiting the underprivileged. Upon discovering that his father had once cast off a servant girl who was carrying Muscadain's unborn half-sister, he ran away from home and joined the Temple Knights. After the Calamity claimed the lives of his parents, he renounced his lineage—though only after finding a new home for his family's former retainers. Though he holds Aymeric and his efforts to cleanse Ishgard of corruption in high esteem, seeing the lowborn he would protect gaining power and influence of their own leaves him with conflicted emotions.

Melisie de Ghivains

"Aid, ser knight!
I know not their grievance, but these lowborn ruffians seek to cause me harm!"

An Elezen baroness of forty-two summers born with uncommon magical powers, she believes her gift to be a clear sign of the inherent superiority of the highborn. After graduating from Saint Endalim's Scholasticate with high honors, Melisie joined the Inquisition, where she distinguished herself to the degree that she was talked about as a prime candidate to someday assume the post of Chief Inquisitor. She later gave in to her family's wishes, however, and was wed to the lord of House Ghivains—whose title she would inherit when he passed away under mysterious circumstances a short few years later. Taking advantage of her numerous friends in high places, she proceeded to secure a place for herself in the highest ranks of the nobility. Feeling her status threatened by the growing revolution, she joined together with the conservative factions and formulated a plan to quash the uprising once and for all. Rumors that she lulls herself to sleep each night with the screams of heretics are unsubstantiated.

Kyokuho Moribe

"The energies twist together with ours like sun and moon, like darkness and light. They are as one, Master!"

A Hingan geomancer of twenty-four summers who journeyed halfway across the world to Ishgard to learn the Western art of astrology. He sought to repair the protective barrier around Kugane erected years ago by his great-grandfather Kazan, the most puissant geomancer of his time. This barrier, which sealed away the aramitama(*) of the golden fox Kinko, had deteriorated over the years. Having acquired a fundamental knowledge of astrology under the tutelage of Leveva and her associates, and further receiving aid from a certain adventurer, he succeeded in combining the three geomantic energies of wind, water, and earth with a fourth energy—that of the stars—to seal away the vengeful spirit of the fox once more.

(*Scribe's note: aramitama is a Hingan term that loosely translates to "primal rage.")

Momozigo Mumuzigo

"Come one, come all, and marvel at a mystery of the Far East! A swordsman hailing from exotic Hingashi, whose bladework is quicker than the eye can see!"

A Dunesfolk showmaster twenty and seven years of age, Momozigo was orphaned at an early age, managing to survive in the back alleys of Ul'dah thanks to his resourcefulness and silver tongue. His career in commerce, which began with the success of such dubious products as his "salubrious sandals," quickly proved to be his one true calling, and by holding gladiatorial tourneys, dance exhibitions, concerts, and more, he quickly laid claim to a loyal clientele across the realm. One fateful day in Vesper Bay, he was nearly slain by bandits he had mistakenly recruited as gladiators, only to be saved by the samurai Musosai. Ever looking to turn a profit, he recruited the Hingan warrior for his spectacle, where he encountered an adventurer of some repute. His almost impure love of money masks a sensitive heart with a surprising sense of morality and obligation to his fellow man.

Makoto Obinata

"Create? You can create naught with the edge of a blade! Nay, what you seek to do is destroy!"

A Hingan woman of twenty-five summers raised as the sheltered daughter of the noble Tachikake clan, she was forced against her will to learn the way of the sword by Ugetsu, her once-kind brother who returned from his journey of training a cruel and violent man. Despite her misgivings, she shared Ugetsu's natural affinity for swordsmanship and soon became a capable warrior in her own right. Soon after this, her brother committed an unspeakable crime, cutting down high-ranking officers of the bakufu. As punishment, her parents were summarily executed, and her family line stricken from the public record. It was then that she abandoned her true name of Kagetsu, dubbed herself "Makoto," and came knocking on the door of the Sekiseigumi, in hopes of exacting revenge on her traitorous sibling. She enjoys relaxing by partaking in the traditional Hingan tea ceremony.

Lambard Calowise

"Your mortal frame brims with vital energies.
An irresistible feast."

Known to some as Lambard the Regal, this Highlander of just over forty winters fought with the valiant Crimson Duelists to liberate Ala Mhigo two decades prior, only to one day turn upon his fellow red mages, slaughtering them in cold blood. One plausible theory at the time claimed that he was bought out by the Garleans, but his disappearance made this impossible to confirm. Years later, the man long thought dead appeared before his erstwhile comrade X'rhun Tia, and the truth was at long last revealed—Lambard was a descendant of the Calowise family, a line that traces its ancestry back to a Mhachi archmagus who forged an infernal pact with the voidsent Lilith, dooming his progeny to gather the life force of those around them at their unholy mistress's behest.

Soulsteal

A fearsome technique employed by Lambard to suck aetherial energies from the wounds of his mortal victims. His mastery of this and other dreadful magicks served as incontrovertible proof that the blood of the voidsent Lilith ran through his veins.

DISCIPLES OF THE LAND AND HAND: MASTERS AND COLLEAGUES

It is not just on the field of battle that Eorzea's adventurers have distinguished themselves. Indeed, many have made a name for themselves as master artisans and artificers, weaving a rich tapestry of tales with the colorful cast of characters who guided and joined them in their pursuits.

Cemi Jinjahl

"Live, love, and craft to fulfill the needs of others—that is the way of the carpenter."

Just seventeen years of age, this Keeper of the Moon was born to a destitute family that could scarcely afford a bed to sleep on. So it was that the gentle-hearted young Cemi took an interest in carpentry, gifting her first finished work—a comfortable chair—to her mother, long plagued by an aching back. Though there is no denying her natural talent—her precision with a saw is second to none—her overzealous nature makes her susceptible to careless mistakes. When a simple misunderstanding leads her to believe that the guild is on the verge of financial collapse, she takes it upon herself to journey to the Far East in search of a solution. No doubt owing to her humble upbringing, she still has the ravenous appetite of a street urchin even now that she is comparatively well-compensated.

Sekka Furukane

"Wh-What are you talking about? M-My face is not red! Even if it is, it is only because I am so excited about my victory which looms on the horizon."

An aspiring swordsmith of nineteen summers who hails from the realm of Suenokuni in Hingashi. Having admired the work of her father—the master artisan Shinto—since she was but a child, she wished for nothing more than to become his apprentice, a request he summarily denied. Not one to abandon her dream so easily, Sekka journeyed west to Limsa Lominsa and joined the Blacksmiths' Guild, in the hopes of honing her skills to the point that her father would deem her worthy. It is there she met Forgemaster Brithael and his number one protégé, with whom she developed a friendly rivalry that fostered her growth as both a blacksmith and a person. Prone to overreaction, it would seem she has developed romantic feelings for Brithael, much to the guildmaster's chagrin. She has been known to ease her frustration by partaking in the Hingan delicacy of sushi.

Shinto Furukane

"The perfect blade can only be forged by those who have cleared their mind of all thoughts not related to the task at hand."

A Hingan artisan of fifty and one years. The preeminent smith in Suenokuni, he was summoned to Kugane by the lord of Clan Buhen himself to serve as chief swordsmith at Kokajiya. The very image of the stern, stoic craftsman, he forgives not the slightest flaw or compromise in his own work, nor that of his apprentices. So steadfast is he in his beliefs that he refused to take on Sekka as an apprentice, suppressing his genuine joy at seeing her passion for the family trade. Though he would never admit it, deep down he is a doting father who was quick to find an excuse to travel across the world to Limsa to check up on his dear daughter. A man of modest tastes, his refreshment of choice is a simple ball of rice with a single pickled plum pressed into the center.

Fugetsu Bugai

"Quality armor cannot be forged without first considering the wearer. A master crafts for the patron's purpose—not to satisfy his own."

A Hingan armorer of fifty-seven winters who serves as proprietor and chief armorer at Kokajiya in Kugane, Fugetsu's reserved demeanor belies a deep and burning passion for his craft. He first took up the hammer at the tender age of twelve, determined to forge for himself the extravagant suits of armor he saw in the woodblock prints of the ancient warriors he so adored. After begging for three days and three nights, a stubborn master finally took him in as an apprentice. Respecting tradition while also making an effort to incorporate new techniques, it is of little surprise that he is ranked among the ten greatest artisans of all the Far East. Though his name is not yet known in Eorzea, many an adventurer has delighted at the distinctive kabuto he fashioned for the Heavensturn festivities.

Emeloth Grayce

"'Tis the simplest articles that separate masters from middling craftsmen. I wonder if our aspiring young goldsmiths will be able to appreciate the difference."

One of the countless Ala Mhigan refugees who fled to Ul'dah with her parents in the wake of the Garlean invasion, this Highlander woman just shy of her thirtieth summer is an accomplished goldsmith who serves as an instructor at the artisans' school established by the sultana. An amiable yet demanding teacher, she endeavors to impart a deeper knowledge of the art to her apprentices J'khebica, Wido, and Hal.

Kanchana

"So, you are to be the schoolmaster.
Mmm, yes, you do look the part."

A warrior of the Vira tribe, this Ananta of thirty and one summers previously served in Alpa's blacksmith regiment. Upon the establishment of the artisans' school, she was called upon to serve as liaison with the Resistance. Her almost mystical goldsmithing techniques—unique to her kind—never fail to astound and stimulate her students.

Atelloune Mairlaid

"Ah, Number Seventy-Two. Ready for work, I see. Wonderful."

The realm's premier naturalist—at least in her own estimation—this Duskwight Elezen of (redacted) summers counts Marcette Manne, esteemed author of the flora and fauna volumes of the Encyclopædia Eorzea, among her innumerable protégés. In an attempt to enlighten the residents of Gridania, she recruits the aspiring taxidermist Enion to assemble an exhibition of animal mounts. It is said that Lady Laniaitte de Haillenarte is also a personal friend of hers.

Enion Townes

"Oh! Are you the leatherworker Miss Atelloune coerc— I mean, hired to help with the mounting?"

This Midlander youth of sixteen summers was discovered by Atelloune Mairlaid and entrusted with assisting the naturalist in putting together her exhibition. Eager at first to prove his worth, the boy's spirits are dampened somewhat when he discovers Atelloune's true nature. Nevertheless, he soldiers on dutifully with the support of his adventurer friend.

Keimei Daitenya

"When my butterfly makes her debut before the world, none but the finest of dresses will do!"

This thirty-year-old Hingan is the proprietor of Daitenya, a prominent garment purveyor in Kugane that has expanded its business of late after the opening of trade routes with Ul'dah. The young master is also a devoted patron of the arts, having supported the geiko Kotocho in her rise from humble beginnings. Recently, he has enlisted the services of an accomplished weaver, that he might commission fashions that will send his precious butterfly soaring to even greater heights.

Kotocho

"A new wind blows in Kugane, and bold youth and individuality will win the day!"

An ambitious Raen girl of twenty-three years, Kotocho is a geiko—a Hingan dancing girl—determined to make a name for herself in Sanjo Hanamachi, Kugane's famed pleasure district. Second only to her mentor and rival Kototsuru in repute, she sets her sights higher still, asking her patron Master Keimei to commission new fashions from a master weaver of Eorzea. Yet her path would not be an easy one, as many trials were yet to come.

Kototsuru

"Poor child. Clearly, my teachings were for naught. But I will deign to give you one final lesson."

This Hyuran geiko is the indisputable star of the Hanamachi, having earned the top distinction at the Kugane-odori festivities for the past several years. With both her wedding and her thirtieth nameday fast approaching, she chose to leave the flower district behind, putting off her retirement just long enough to dance one last dance with Kotocho, her protégé and heir apparent.

Niellefresne Thaudour

"The judgment of man is clouded by the promise of wealth and opportunity."

A genius goldsmith who crafted many a work of exquisite beauty for Eshtaime's Lapidaries by day, by night he was a passionate revolutionary who plotted an uprising with his comrades Greinfarr, Popokkuli, and Seserukka. He did not live to carry out his plans, as he was slain before his twenty-fifth summer, cut down by an unknown entity wielding the accursed blade Heartstrike. Niellefresne's life quenched, his corpse lingered on, curiously immune to rot and decay.

Greinfarr Redblade

"So if there's aught I can do now, I'll do it. Let us give him, and ourselves, peace."

A former champion of the Coliseum, this Roegadyn man of thirty and nine years harbors bitter regrets from his younger days, when his untempered passion and recklessness led to tragic consequences. Hoping to bring his fallen friend Niellefresne a measure of peace, he and his erstwhile brothers-in-arms enlist the services of an expert alchemist.

Popokkuli Sesekkuli

"Ohhh, I can't wait to catch whoever did this. I am going to do things to this person. Unspeakable things..."

A Dunesfolk of thirty-six summers, Popokkuli is the elder of the eponymous twin sons of Amajina & Sons Mineral Concern. An accomplished miner in his own right, he was one of the young revolutionaries who joined Niellefresne's uprising fifteen years ago. At the behest of Greinfarr, he joins his former comrades in their quest to solve the mystery of the undecaying corpse.

Seserukka Poporukka

"There's nowhere left to run now. We will end you!"

The younger—and more level-headed—of the twin sons of Amajina & Sons Mineral Concern, Seserukka is the staunch confidant of his more excitable elder brother. Together, the two are a force to be reckoned with in the Ul'dahn economy. Seserukka, too, shares a connection to the unfortunate events of fifteen years prior.

Raulf Redhill

"The key to the dish is the broth, called dashi, which as far as I can decipher means 'exit juice.' I'm, er, sure it sounds more appetizing in the Doman tongue."

Orphaned in the war when he was but a child, this Ala Mhigan refugee now in his twenty-fifth summer wears two hats—an adventurer's helm and a culinarian's cap. On a tomestone-exchanging excursion to Revenant's Toll, he fell in love with Anzu, a refugee of Doma, and has been expanding his culinary horizons ever since, in hopes of earning the respect of her father, the imposing Unzan.

Anzu Zenbu

"Such is the spirit of Far Eastern cuisine—to respect each ingredient and allow it to shine."

A Hyuran girl of twenty and three, she escaped Doma and fled to Revenant's Toll, where she counts tomestones at Rowena's House of Splendors. Won over by one Raulf Redhill's repeated earnest advances, Anzu fell in love with the strapping young man, and the two often have trysts at Silvertear Falls, far from the disapproving eye of her austere father.

Unzan Zenbu

"An ignoble adventurer making our noble cuisine?
I would be laughing were the idea not so absurd!"

This stern-faced Hyur of some fifty years of age is a refugee from Doma, where he owned one of the most prestigious restaurants in the land. A man set in his ways, he abhors Eorzean cuisine, which he considers too oily for his refined Eastern palate. He holds adventurers in similarly low esteem, considering them to be little more than muscle-bound vagrants.

Edgyth Finewater

"It's stunningly beautiful, and yet,
beautifully stunning. All at the same time!"

This Midlander girl of eighteen was born in a humble farm village in Thanalan. Admiring her father's green thumb, she aspired to become a botanist, a dream that was dashed when the Calamity claimed the lives of her parents. Bereft of family and home, she drifted to Ul'dah, where she was reunited with Sawney, a treasure hunter from her hometown. He invited her to settle in Idyllshire, where she opened Greengrub Mudplots, and resumed her study of botany in the hopes of helping the locals feed themselves.

Sawney the Twice Locked

"Fresh air at last! I tell you, it's clammier than a goblin's arse crack in there!"

A Hyuran man of thirty and two years who hails from the same sleepy hamlet as Edgyth Finewater. He came to resent his humble place of origin, and ran away from home in search of treasure and adventure. At the invitation of Midnight Dew, a colleague he met during a sojourn in Ul'dah, he took part in an expedition to the Dravanian hinterlands, becoming one of the founding members of Idyllshire almost entirely by chance.

Nonowato Nanawato

"We know what we must do.
Let us finish what we started, for the chief!"

Born to a prosperous Dunesfolk merchant family, this twenty-two-year-old from Ul'dah found greater allure in creating goods than trading them, leading him to seek an apprenticeship at Naldiq & Vymelli's. After a few years of training, he struck off on his own in search of a place where he could study as he saw fit. His travels led him to Idyllshire, where he became a valued employee at Stickqix's Bangpots.

Stickqix Foundrocks

"I frankly found gobbiespeak a ghastly hindrance to busydeals—sorry, business. This spurred me on to work tirelessly to master the common tongue."

A goblin who has made it his life's work to push the very boundaries of technology to their utmost limits, Stickqix was once a senior officer in the Illuminati—the secretive fraternity of goblin scholars—but left them behind when the schematics for a piece of heavy machinery he was developing were stolen by Quickthinx and repurposed for military use. With a dream of fostering cooperation between researchers of all races, he took part in the founding of Idyllshire, establishing a workshop that bears his name.

Finchaser Govv

"Pssshhh! To see the shooting stars return to these seas, I will spare no effort!"

A hot-blooded Sahagin youth of twenty-five summers, this avid angler grew despondent when his favorite fish—the brilliantly hued shooting stars—all but disappeared from the Indigo Deep. Personally vowing to ascertain the cause, his quest took an unexpected turn when he himself was reeled in by Master Wawalago's lure, and the two quickly bonded over their love of fishing. His wild fish chase would eventually lead him east to the Ruby Sea, where together with his newfound companions—an adventurer and the angler Reyna—he came face-to-fish with the truth.

Reyna Breakhook

"There's something awfully fishy about you. Are you a fellow fishing fanatic? An angling apostle? An afishionado!?"

Two years shy of her thirtieth nameday, this Midlander earns her keep as a roving assassin-for-hire. Most recently, she was tasked by an Ishgardian noble with eliminating his brother to secure his lordship, but upon learning that her target was none other than her fishing companion Ansaulme, she quickly betrayed her client and confessed the truth. At Wawalago's request, she joins the party investigating the disappearance of the shooting stars.

Seigetsu the Enlightened

"Hasten not to judge, for profound truth may lie in even visions of the night."

Far and away the most voracious reader and bibliophile among all his people, this cultured Namazu of an age equivalent to twenty and seven Hyuran years received a tremendous shock when he learned from a dictionary that his given name of Gyofun was homophonous with the word for "fish droppings." So as never to suffer that indignity again, he assumed the name of Seigetsu the Enlightened, a distinguished Doman poet, vowing to devote his life to leading the Namazu into an era of cultural renaissance.

Gyorei

"Why, the mikoshi is so beautiful I cannot bear to look away! How fortunate that I do not blink."

A young Namazu maiden—twenty or so summers by the Hyuran reckoning—she is said to be the most fetching beauty in Yuzuka Manor. Good-natured and with a strong motherly instinct, she worries often about her childhood friend Gyoshin, an artisan with a penchant for injuring himself. One time, when Gyoshin crashed into a giant pot, suffering a nasty gash, Gyorei was the only one to tend to his wound while the other bystanders doubled over in laughter.

THE AGENTS OF ENQUIRY: THEIR CLIENTS AND QUARRY

In a world rife with mystery, one will find no shortage of those proclaiming to be in the business of solving them. Wherever crime dares rear its ugly head—be it in Eorzea or the Far East—these inspectors du jour and their intrepid band of loyalists are there—to untangle enigmas with their infallible powers of deduction, and bring evildoers to justice.

The Kugane Wolf Burglar

"Bloody fools, the lot of you. Blind to the true villain in your midst..."

The thief who struck fear in the hearts of Kugane's wealthy elite was born in Doma and raised during the imperial occupation. When he was but nine, his parents were killed during a purge of insurgents, prompting him to leave his homeland behind and journey across the sea to Kugane, where he met a kindly samurai who resolved to raise him as his own.

Alas, this happiness too would prove fleeting, for his adoptive father's beloved sword, the Soboro Sukehiro, caught the eye of a disreputable merchant named Akebono, who entrapped the samurai in a web of debt that he might claim the blade for himself. The plot succeeded, and the samurai pledged his sword as collateral while he labored day and night to repay the sum...only to die from exhaustion.

Deprived once more of his only family, the Lupin youth returned to Yanxia, where he learned the arts of the shinobi and befriended a great eagle he named Montaro, and together returned to Kugane. Now twenty-three, he seeks justice for his second father and other innocents upon whom Akebono and his ilk would prey.

The Soboro Sukehiro

The finest sword ever created by one of the fourteen legendary swordsmiths of Hingashi, Sukehiro. Regarded as a masterwork of the modern tradition, it is coveted by every collector of Far Eastern swords. If one were to attempt to put a price on the blade, it would easily surpass the value of several modest clans' holdings.

Shigure Moribito

"Is this the will of the kami...?"

The third son of a minor clan of Bukyo, the twenty-eight-year-old Shigure knew from an early age that he stood to inherit little, and so he resolved to enter government service. He lived as a ronin for some time before coming to Kugane, where he sought to join the Sekiseigumi, believing them to be stalwart defenders of the common man who served justice and punished the wicked. However, when he was turned away by the recruiters, he was forced to make ends meet by working odd jobs for an okiya's proprietress. Yet even as he supped on barley and rice porridge and pretended it was grilled fish, he continued to hold out hope for an opportunity to prove himself worthy, which came at last when the Kugane Wolf Burglar began to terrorize the merchants of the port town.

Yojimbo

"I feel so...so conflicted!"

A peerless warrior who commands equally impressive fees for his services, Yojimbo is rumored to have been hired by the soy sauce mogul, Kageyama, and his motley crew of insurgents when they occupied Kugane Castle—though he was not present when the Sekiseigumi arrived in the wake of the adventurers who defeated the rebel forces. He was last seen in the employ of Akebono, another merchant of ill repute, which might lead some to assume he has no scruples and cares only for koban. Or could it be that he is simply an avid collector of swords? And just who or what is he? Truly, he is a man of many mysteries.

Daigoro

"Woof, woof!"

The loyal companion of Yojimbo and a good dog. As the ronin tells it, the two first met while they were wandering the wilderness alone, and in one another instantly found a kindred spirit. Ever since, they have been inseparable. A lovely story, perhaps, but given the nature of the dog's owner, one cannot help but question its veracity. One thing is certain: Daigoro is enamored with koban, and will not hesitate to go bounding after one hurled into the air.

Akebono Kusushi

"That which I desire, I take."

A merchant of fifty-two summers, Akebono comes from a long line of apothecaries, and left his home of Suenokuni behind to come to Kugane and open his own shop. With the aid of rare Hannish reagents, he swiftly achieved great success and built a reputation as a consummate businessman. However, he has also been criticized for his ruthless strategy of cornering the market on particular medicines that he might raise their prices and reap tremendous profits.

THE SINS OF SASAMO

With a name as imposing as the winding climb required to reach their terminus, the Eighty Sins of Sasamo have endured countless summers to tell the tale of a princess who would dare defy the throne, only to pay the ultimate price for her folly.
Yet while once a scandal that rocked the ruling house to its foundations, sending waves of shock and awe throughout the populace, details of the sordid affair have, with time, grown as worn and weathered as the very stones that shape the eponymous steps.

Crime and Punishment

According to records penned by Ul'dahn court historians, it was in the 1388th year of the Sixth Astral Era that princess Sasamo Ul Samo—first in line to the throne—turned cloak against both nation and kin. Having grown weary of her elder sister Sasadi's rule, Sasamo is believed to have quietly forged alliances with remnants of the recently overthrown Thorne dynasty in a plot to claim the sultanate for herself. Before the plan could be executed, however, one of Sasamo's own cabal betrayed her to the sultana, resulting in the princess's immediate arrest and imprisonment in the Marasaja Pit.

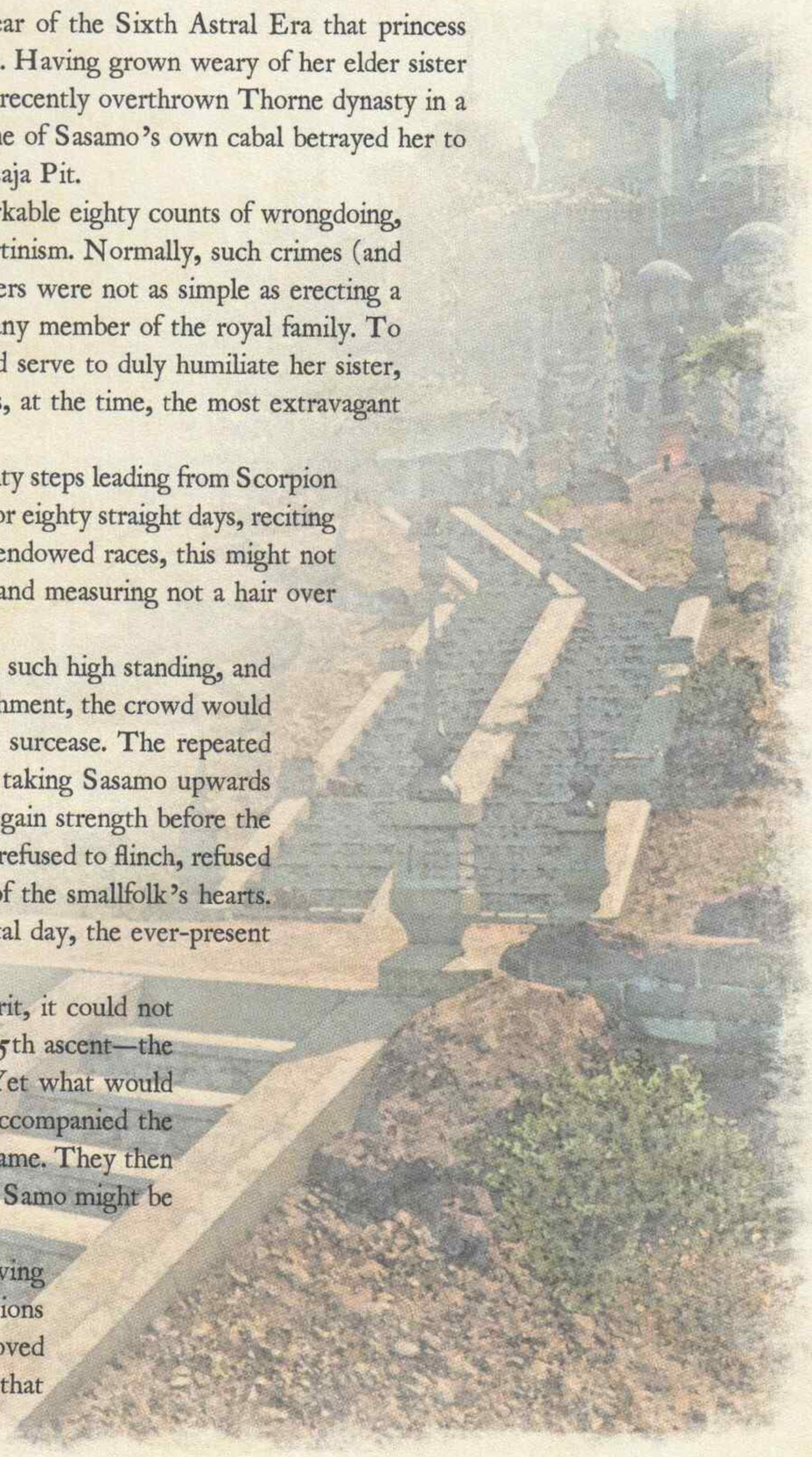
At the much-publicized trial, the princess was charged with and convicted of a remarkable eighty counts of wrongdoing, from high treason against the sultanate and attempted regicide, to blasphemy and libertinism. Normally, such crimes (and in such abundance) would be punishable with a sentence no less than death. Yet matters were not as simple as erecting a gallows in the Gold Court, for sultanate law specifically prevented the execution of any member of the royal family. To see justice meted, the sultana tasked her counselors to design a punishment that would serve to duly humiliate her sister, while proving severe enough to deter any future uprisings. The resulting sentence was, at the time, the most extravagant the realm had ever witnessed.

For each charge brought against her, Sasamo was ordered to climb and descend the eighty steps leading from Scorpion Crossing to the Western Trade Gate (now the Gate of the Sultana) eighty times a day for eighty straight days, reciting aloud one of her eighty crimes with each step taken. For some of the more vertically endowed races, this might not have been such a daunting task, but for a privileged noble weighing but a few stones and measuring not a hair over three fulms, the punishment was brutal to say the least.

As is their wont, the citizenry of Ul'dah were eager to witness the shaming of one in such high standing, and took relish in their part of the ever-raucous rabble. In the first weeks of Sasamo's punishment, the crowd would gather every morn at cockcall to jeer and spit, hurling profanities and refuse without surcease. The repeated abuse was a heavy burden on both mind and body of the princess, and soon it began taking Sasamo upwards of eighteen bells to complete her daily circuit, leaving little time in the oubliettes to regain strength before the following sunrise. Yet, to her credit, the disgraced second daughter of the former sultan refused to flinch, refused to hang her head in shame. It was this stubborn resilience that saw a transformation of the smallfolk's hearts. After witnessing the tiny maiden will herself up and down the dusty tor day after brutal day, the ever-present jeers slowly began melting away into silent awe before eventually rising to cheers.

However, while the encouragement of the populace was enough to brighten her spirit, it could not provide succor for Sasamo's weary flesh, and on the 80th day—the 67th step of her 75th ascent—the princess could lift her legs no more, and collapsed of exhaustion, never to rise again. Yet what would happen next would leave the city-state awestruck—the crowd of smallfolk who had accompanied the princess for nigh on three moons rushed to her side and gently raised aloft the wasted frame. They then proceeded to carry it in somber silence for the five remaining circuits so that Sasamo Ul Samo might be absolved of her crimes before the long journey to Thal's realm.

The sultana was visibly shaken by the turn of events—wrought with guilt for approving the punishment that would ultimately condemn her only sibling. In response to the actions of the smallfolk, Sasadi immediately proclaimed Sasamo's sentence rightly served, and moved to rename the very stairway upon which her sister fell the "Eighty Steps of Sasamo," that the people might ever remember the day. Or so the royal court would have us believe.



An Inconvenient Truth

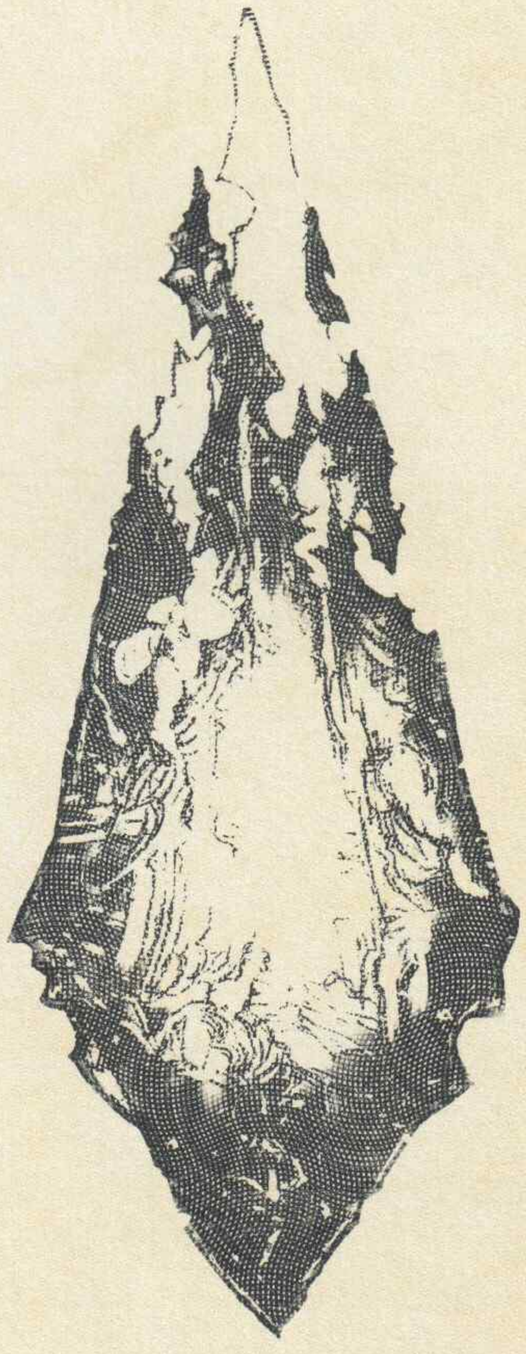
Often do we find that history is as malleable as hot wax, with historians serving as but the seals of the ruling class. Might there not have been another side to this tragic tale—a side that might paint a different picture? The recent discovery of a diary allegedly penned by Sasamo in her final days casts doubt on the court-spun narrative that Sasamo was the driving force behind the failed coup, suggesting that the true villains of the story may be her advisors—advisors working under orders of the sultana herself in an attempt by Sasadi to preemptively quell any potential threats to her rule by constructing an elaborate plot that would see her sister implicated in crimes inescapable. This theory is further supported by the fact that, despite documented collusion with the princess, each of Sasamo's advisors silently escaped any manner of punishment, with most simply disappearing from Ul'dah altogether. A convenient end for the sultana, to say the least.

Is it not possible that, trapped in a position where any negativity towards the now-martyred princess might incite the Ul'dahn citizenry, Sasadi Ul Sadi was forced to make a move that would be received favorably by the public? Had she truly forgiven her sister? Her actions would suggest otherwise. Petitions by the populace to hold yearly remembrances for the fallen princess were consistently denied, and pilgrims who had journeyed to walk the steps turned away by guards citing "congestion." What is more, but three summers had passed before the sultana ordered the city charters rewritten, quietly changing the steps' name once again to the current "Eighty Sins of Sasamo." And the episode involving the smallfolk bearing the princess after her premature passing? Rewritten with an "official" account stating that Sasamo collapsed on the final step of the final pass. A slow, yet surgically precise barrage of palace-centric propaganda had become a pall over the memories of the people, leaving them susceptible to a truth convenient to none save the court.

Encyclopædia Eorzea II

BOOK V

HER BOUNDS



CHRONICLES OF COURAGE

Given the exceptionally eventful lives that they lead, it is of little wonder that adventurers are wont to keep detailed records of their experiences, be it the sights they see or the foes they face. Drawing upon their eyewitness accounts, this section compiles locales of interest found across the realm and beyond.

A Realm of Danger

To the average civilian who spends his days in the relative safety of the city, an adventurer's tale of derring-do told in taverns is a welcome source of excitement. From fiend-infested caverns and ancient ruins to military facilities brimming with advanced technology, where one's feet may not easily tread, through the power of words, one's imagination may yet run wild.

The Azim Steppe

Bardam's Mettle 169

Azys Lla

The Aetherochemical Research Facility 159
The Fractal Continuum 161

The Black Shroud

Amdapor Keep 148
Baelsar's Wall 166
Haukke Manor 138
The Lost City of Amdapor 150
The Palace of the Dead 178
The Tam-Tara Deepcroft 134
The Thousand Maws of Toto-Rak 137

Coerthas

The Aurum Vale 144
Dzemael Darkhold 143
The Dusk Vigil 154
Snowcloak 152
The Stone Vigil 142
The Vault 157

Dravania

The Aery 156
The Antitower 163
The Great Gubal Library 158
Saint Mocianne's Arboretum 162
Sohm Al 155
Sohr Khai 164

Gyr Abania

Ala Mhigo 172
Castrum Abania 171
The Drowned City of Skalla 175
The Temple of the Fist 174

Hingashi

Kugane Castle 173

La Noscea

Brayflox's Longstop 139
Hullbreaker Isle 151
Pharos Sirius 149
The Sastasha Seagrot 133
The Wanderer's Palace 145

Mor Dhona

The Keeper of the Lake 153

The Ruby Sea

Heaven-on-High 179
Hells' Lid 176
Shisui of the Violet Tides 168

The Sea of Clouds

Neverreap 160

Thanalan

Castrum Meridianum 146
Copperbell Mines 135
Cutter's Cry 141
Halatali 136
The Praetorium 147
The Sunken Temple of Qarn 140

Xelphatol

Xelphatol 165

Yanxia

Doma Castle 170
The Swallow's Compass 177

Other Regions

The Forbidden Land, Eureka 180
The Sirensong Sea 167

THE SASTASHA SEAGROT

A Secret Port of Call

On the coastline of western La Noscea, carved out of a rocky cliff by the sea's ceaseless thrashing, there weaves a natural network of caverns called the Sastasha Seagrot. Meaning "many shells" in the Sahagin tongue, its name harks back to its former purpose as the beast tribe's gathering grounds.

Rumor holds that, some fifty years past, the pirate king Mistbeard drove out the Sahagin inhabitants, whereupon he built docks for vessel repair and loading, quarters for his crew, and a tavern where they might rest after a hard day's plundering. This port thrived in secret until twenty-two years ago when Mistbeard abruptly vanished, leaving the facilities untended and in disrepair.

At around the time of the Calamity, the Sahagin, desiring a foothold for their conquest of La Noscea, bade their minions reclaim the area. Known as the Serpent Reavers, these villainous pirates came to terrorize the region, vexing Lominsan authorities to no end and earning the Seagrot considerable notoriety.

Denn the Orcatoothed

A renowned warrior of the Sahagin, his epithet is an allusion to the orca's viciousness and the tenacity with which it pursues its prey. Favoring strategy over strength, his was the mind behind the utilization of men to achieve Sahagin ends.

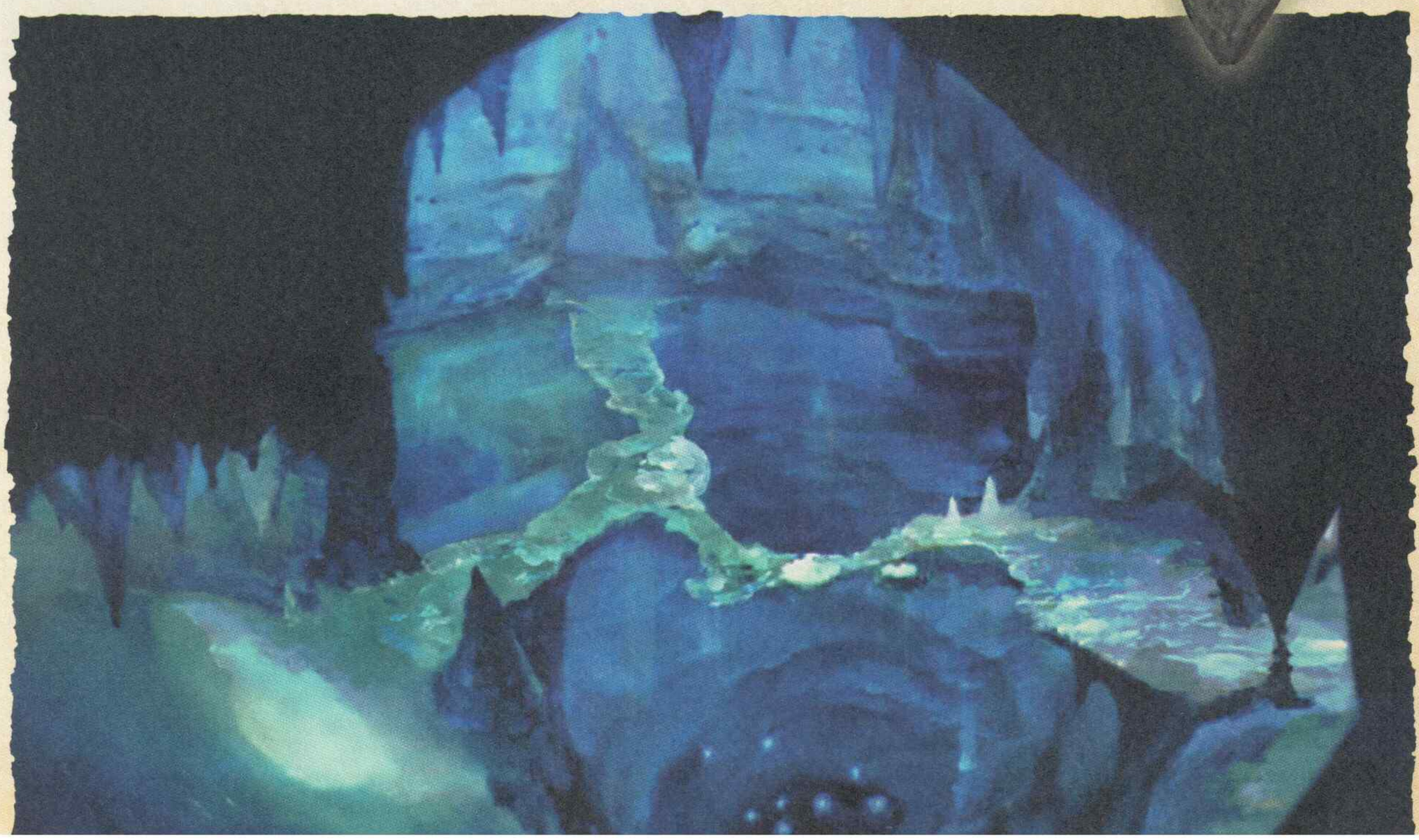
Return of the Reavers

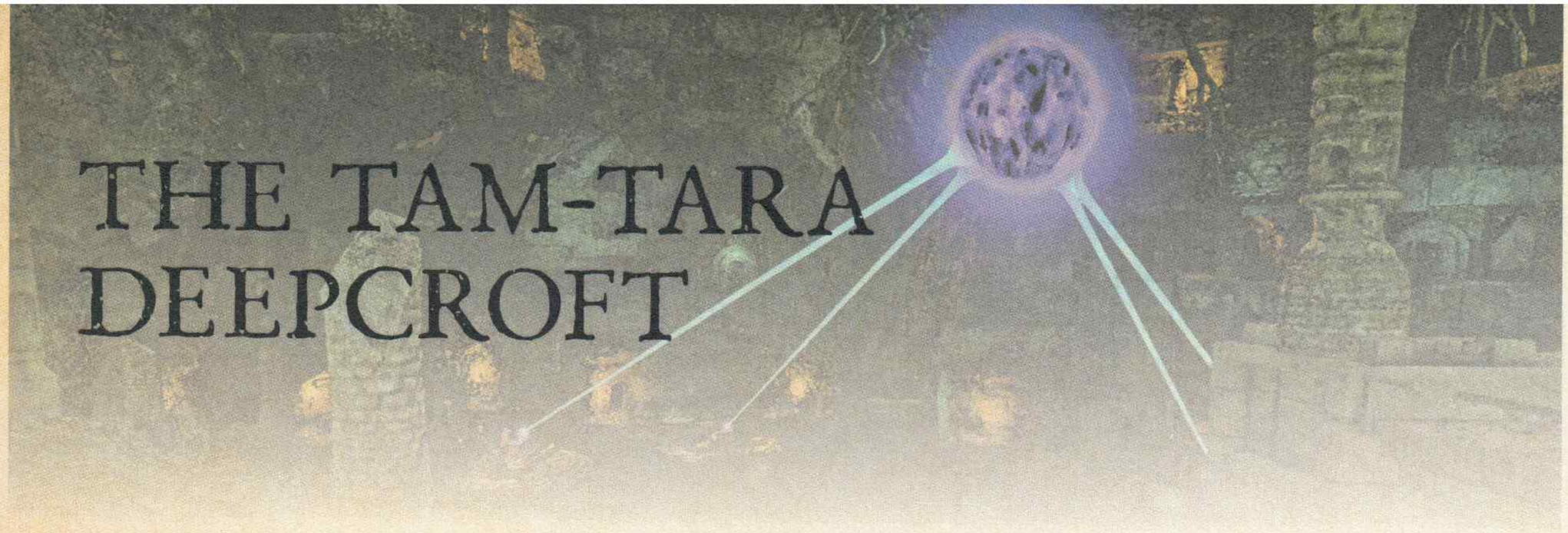
The dastardly Serpent Reavers were eventually vanquished at the hands of dauntless adventurers, after which the 4th Levy Yellowjackets were garrisoned in the Seagrot to maintain a security presence. Ere long, however, the soldiers found themselves overwhelmed by mysterious invaders whose appearance straddled that of man and monster.

So it was that adventurers again ventured into the caverns to deal with these abominations, who were discovered to be none other than members of the Serpent Reavers. Examining their remains, the aetherial researcher Ceana posited that the pirates' monstrous forms were the result of repeated exposure to their master Leviathan's corrupting aether—a theory which has gone on to gain traction in academia.

Captain Madison

Formerly the navigator aboard a merchant vessel, Madison orchestrated his own disappearance some ten years ago in order to escape a prodigious gambling debt. Of his trail he left no trace until he reemerged as a member of the newly formed Serpent Reavers. Thriving in the pirating trade, he swiftly climbed to the post of captain, but his failure to defend the Sastasha Seagrot earned him the ire of his Sahagin masters. For his punishment, he was given to Leviathan once more and transformed into a hideous fiend.





THE TAM-TARA DEEPCROFT

Revenge of the Lambs

Established during the Gelmorran age, this subterranean crypt has long been used to inter Gridania's dead. In the wake of the Calamity, however, its silent tunnels came to echo with the sinister whispers and furtive footfalls of the Lambs of Dalamud—a doomsday cult whose members worship the red moon as their savior. Rising to infamy as the sun set on the Sixth Astral Era, these twisted souls kidnapped hapless citizens to offer as blood sacrifices to hasten their god's coming. With Dalamud's fiery destruction, however, their prophecy went unfulfilled, and it appeared as though the flock would scatter to the winds. Alas, the flames of fanaticism are not easily extinguished, and the embittered cultists swore vengeance against those who denied them their salvation, plotting to use the remains of the dead to call forth a dread voidsent. Hard-pressed to deal with the threat, the Gods' Quiver petitioned the aid of adventurers, a band of whom braved the crypt's dark depths to put an end to the cultists and their baleful ambitions.

Galvanth the Dominator

In life, King Galvanth of Gelmorra was a mighty ruler and a peerless lancer, and in death, this rendered him an ideal vessel for a formidable voidsent. That which was ultimately summoned was a soulflayer, a being occupying the sixth rung of the hierarchy of twelve. After the voidsent was vanquished, the Padjal E-Una-Kotor performed a rite of purification upon Galvanth's corse, laying him to eternal rest once more.

Avere Bravearm

A ghastly being quickened by means of necromancy, using the head of the deceased gladiator Avere as its vessel. While it may never be known how Edda came to possess knowledge of the forbidden art, entries from her recovered journal suggest that towards the end she suffered from hallucinations. When tormented souls walk in solitude, it seems their path shall ever lead to tragedy.

A Letter to Spell the End

It all began with a letter to Paiyo Reiyo. The sender was a former adventuring companion, the conjurer Edda, and the content was an invitation to her wedding—to her deceased fiancé, Avere. Though the bereaved maiden had put on a brave face in the beginning, it would seem the weight of her loss was too much to bear. Suppressing a welling sense of dread, Paiyo Reiyo decided to confront his past and set forth for the ceremony's ominous venue: the Tam-Tara Deepcroft.

Prior to this, the Lalafell had taken into his confidence an accomplished adventurer, and he was wise to do so, for it spared him a fate worse than death. Having freed him from his entrapment, the adventurer descended into the bowels of the crypt, where he came face-to-face with Edda herself. The grief-mad maiden commenced a dark ritual using Avere's macabre remains, but her plan was thwarted and she slipped and fell, plummeting into the abyss.

COPPERBELL MINES

Rise of the Hecatoncheires

Situated in western Thanalan, these mines were abandoned three hundred years ago when their veins dried up, and monsters moved in to replace the miners who moved out. Recently, however, Amajina & Sons Mineral Concern reclaimed the shafts and, employing new excavation techniques, proceeded to expand downwards in an attempt to tap yet undiscovered veins of valuable metal.

Unfortunately, it was not riches the powder kegs uncovered, but sheer terror, for when the smoke cleared, out poured an army of raging giants from the darkest recesses of the mines. The hecatoncheires—thralls of the lost Thorne Dynasty—were freed from their lightless prison, centuries of hate fueling their madness. In dealing with this unexpected disturbance, the Concern turned to the Adventurers' Guild, who dispatched a band of their bravest to exterminate the rampaging creatures.

Gyges the Great

Of the hecatoncheires who were unleashed in Copperbell Mines, few could claim to be as imposing as Gyges the Great. What enchantments were once woven into his golden helm to ensure his obedience had long since failed, allowing him to turn his massive hammer on hapless fools instead of rock.

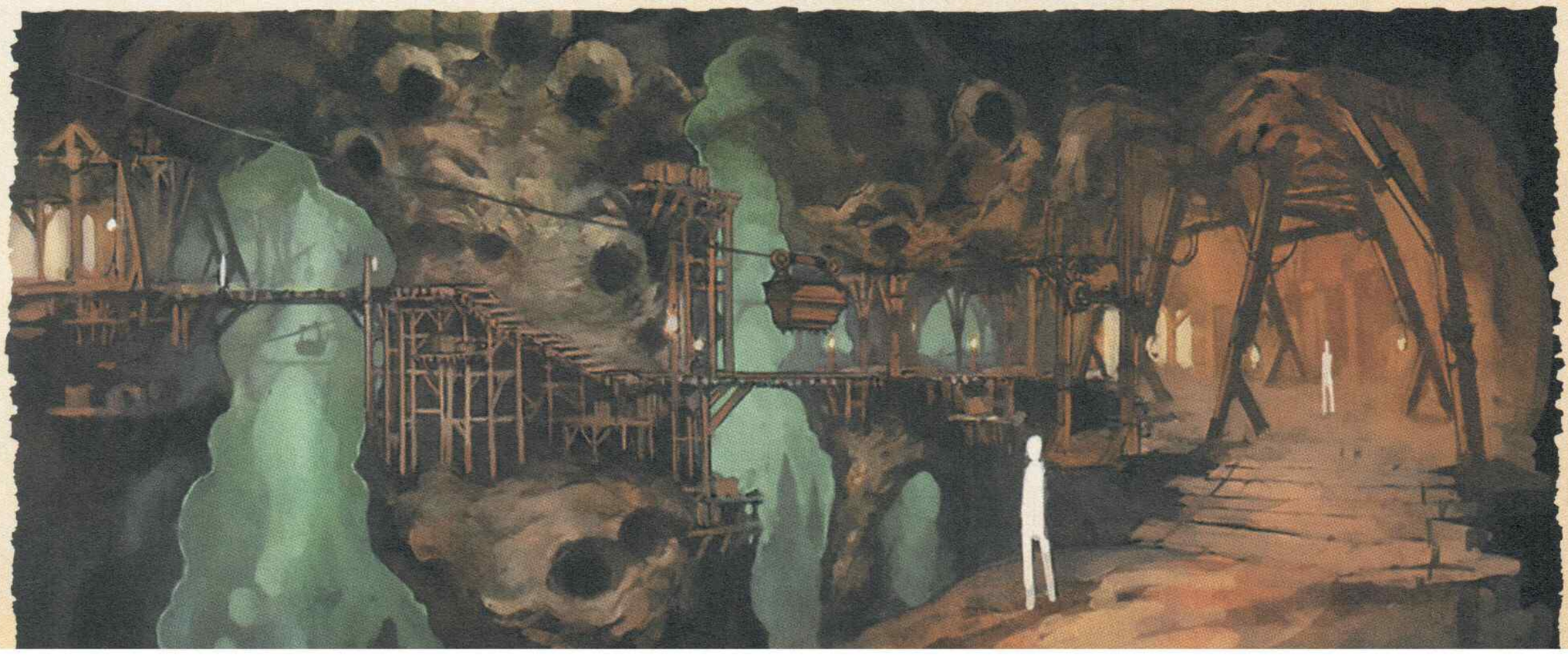
Return of the Hecatoncheires

Owing to the efforts of courageous adventurers, the hecatoncheires were put down and Copperbell Mines were safe once more...or so it was thought. While conducting a survey of the deep shafts, a crew of engineers watched in horror as more of the enraged giants rose forth from the darkness, and the mines fell into chaos anew.

Again adventurers were called upon, and again they triumphed, finally putting paid to a sordid centuries-old tale of slavery and rebellion. Yet though the trouble was settled underground, it continued overground as Amajina & Sons Mineral Concern demanded reparation from the Adventurers' Guild for losses resulting from the unfulfilled first cull. The dispute was brought before the Order of Nald'thal, the arbiters of Ul'dahn law, and the matter was settled with the two parties sharing the burden equally.

Ouranos

Leader of the hecatoncheires imprisoned in Copperbell Mines and a king among his kind. Those adventurers who did battle with Ouranos reported that he commanded an abyss worm as a hunter might command a hound. Since his existence came to light, he has become a source of intrigue for alchemists, at least one of whom wished to study him for the secrets of his astounding vitality.

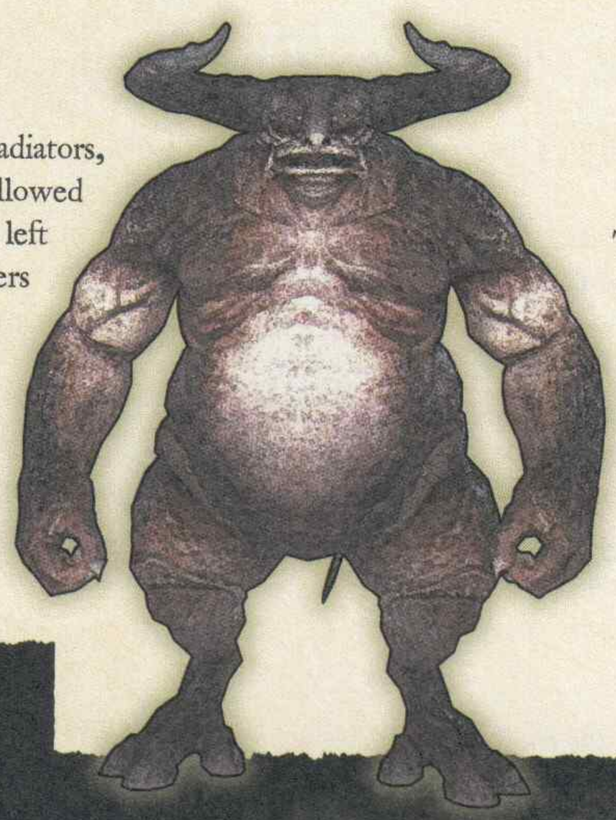


HALATALI

Given to the Beasts

Established by the Coliseum Foundation as a training ground for its gladiators, Halatali was home to a menagerie of fighting beasts. In the chaos that followed the Calamity, however, the facility was abandoned and the creatures were left to starve. Five years later, in a bid to resume operations, a team of builders was sent in to survey the premises. But instead of carcasses littering the floors, they found feral beasts prowling the halls, grown unnaturally strong and savage through a ruthless struggle for survival.

Fearless adventurers were called in to eliminate the creatures, and following extensive renovations, Halatali was declared fit for purpose once more. Reporting on its restoration, Ul'dah's leading paper, the Mythril Eye, hailed Halatali as one of the great post-Calamity revival stories.



Tangata

While the sultanate ordinarily prohibits the commercial use of voidsent, a generous donation made to the Order of Nald'thal secured an exception for this ogre, which was put to fighting in the Coliseum. It must be noted, however, that the specimen was captured in its natural habitat in Coerthas and not summoned via forbidden magicks.

Adventurous Opposition

With the danger purged and renovations completed, Halatali's doors were thrown open for the first time since the Calamity, its halls echoing once more with the familiar clang of steel and the roar of beasts. Seeking to further hone its gladiators' sword arms, the Coliseum Foundation reached out to adventurers for sterner opposition, full many of whom eagerly answered the call, taking to the field in mock battles.

Throwing its doors open wider, Halatali later came to host spectacles for the public, most notably the final bout of the prestigious Mythril Cup.

Narasimha

A fearsome manticore commanded by Mumuepo, the disgraced former high priest of the Order of Nald'thal, who took to the bloodsands in order to make bail on corruption charges. No coin is spared in ensuring the battle-fitness and ferocity of this main attraction. To bind such a vicious creature to his will, the thaumaturge is said to have employed an ancient art of enthrallment whose secrets he parsed from an old Belah'dian tome.

THE THOUSAND MAWS OF TOTO-RAK

On the Sylph Elder's Trail

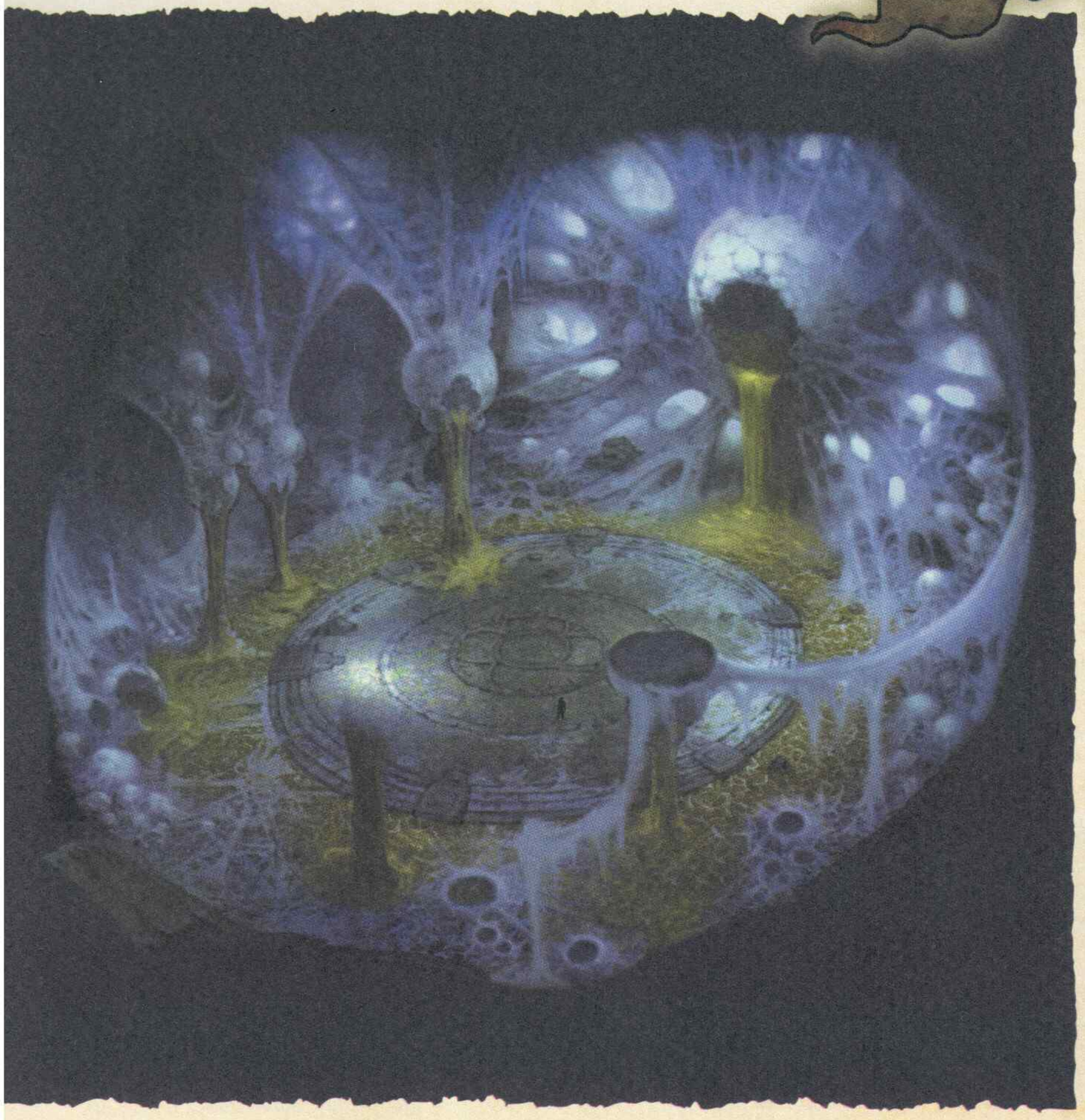
In the past, this forbidding dungeon held all of Gridania's foulest criminals, from arsonists to poachers. Its name is taken from a man-eating creature of legend, perhaps by way of a brutal warden who wore the selfsame epithet.

Declared barbaric by the Elder Seedseer some thirty years ago, Toto-Rak was abandoned and subsequently became a hive for fiends. It was into this perilous place that the sylph elder, Frixio, inadvertently wandered as he fled from imperial soldiers, prompting the Scions of the Seventh Dawn to mount a rescue. Within the dank and gloomy depths, the adventurer sent to find the sylph encountered one of the Ascians, the servants of Darkness, who in no uncertain terms made known the threat they posed.

Coeurl o' Nine Tails

The name of this enormous ochu is a morbid reference to the cruel whips the dungeon's gaolers once employed. Made by binding together several cords, the Coeurl inflicts multiple wounds in a single stroke—an excruciating pain evoked by the seedkin's overgrown vines.

Mites reportedly infested the dungeon's inner sector, which was slick with their vile secretions and grimly adorned with their prey, tightly bound and preserved for later consumption.



Graffias

Already fattened from an abundance of prey within Toto-Rak, this banemite gained further girth and unnatural ferocity through the Ascian Lahabrea's dark powers. In the wake of this incident, the Order of the Twin Adder conducted a thorough sweep of the dungeon, destroying all of the vilekin to the last egg.

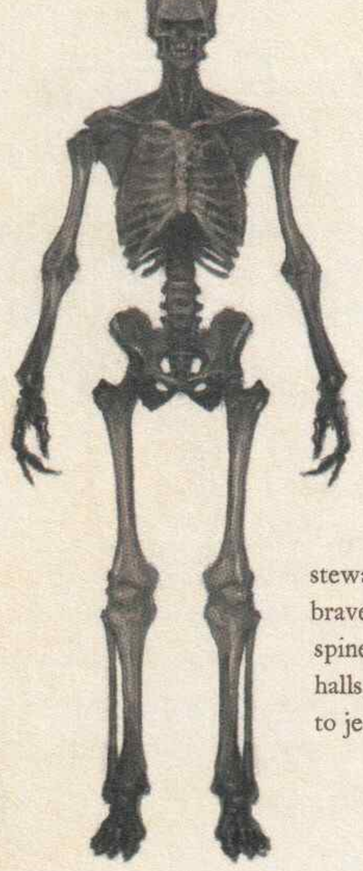
HAUKKE MANOR

The Tragedy of House Dartancours

Home to generations of Gridania's rulers, Haukke Manor was long frowned upon by the people of Gridania as a symbol of excess. This sentiment was eventually acknowledged by the Elder Seedseer before the previous, a known reformist, who ordered the estate sold off, and the title came to be in the possession of a proud and ancient Wildwood family—the Dartancours.

The young mistress of the house, Lady Amandine, was famed for her beauty. Alas, the Calamity left her hideously disfigured, and she subsequently sequestered herself from the world. Not long thereafter, a series of gruesome killings shook the Twelveswood. The bodies of maidens began turning up, one after the next, their mutilated faces tying the murders together.

The Order of the Twin Adder and the Wood Wailers embarked upon an investigation, but the mystery would be solved by one adventurer, who discovered that the lady, under Ascian manipulation, had entered into a pact with beings of darkness. In a twisted bid to regain her beauty, she made blood sacrifices of her maidservants, and in so doing transformed the manor into a lair of voidsent.



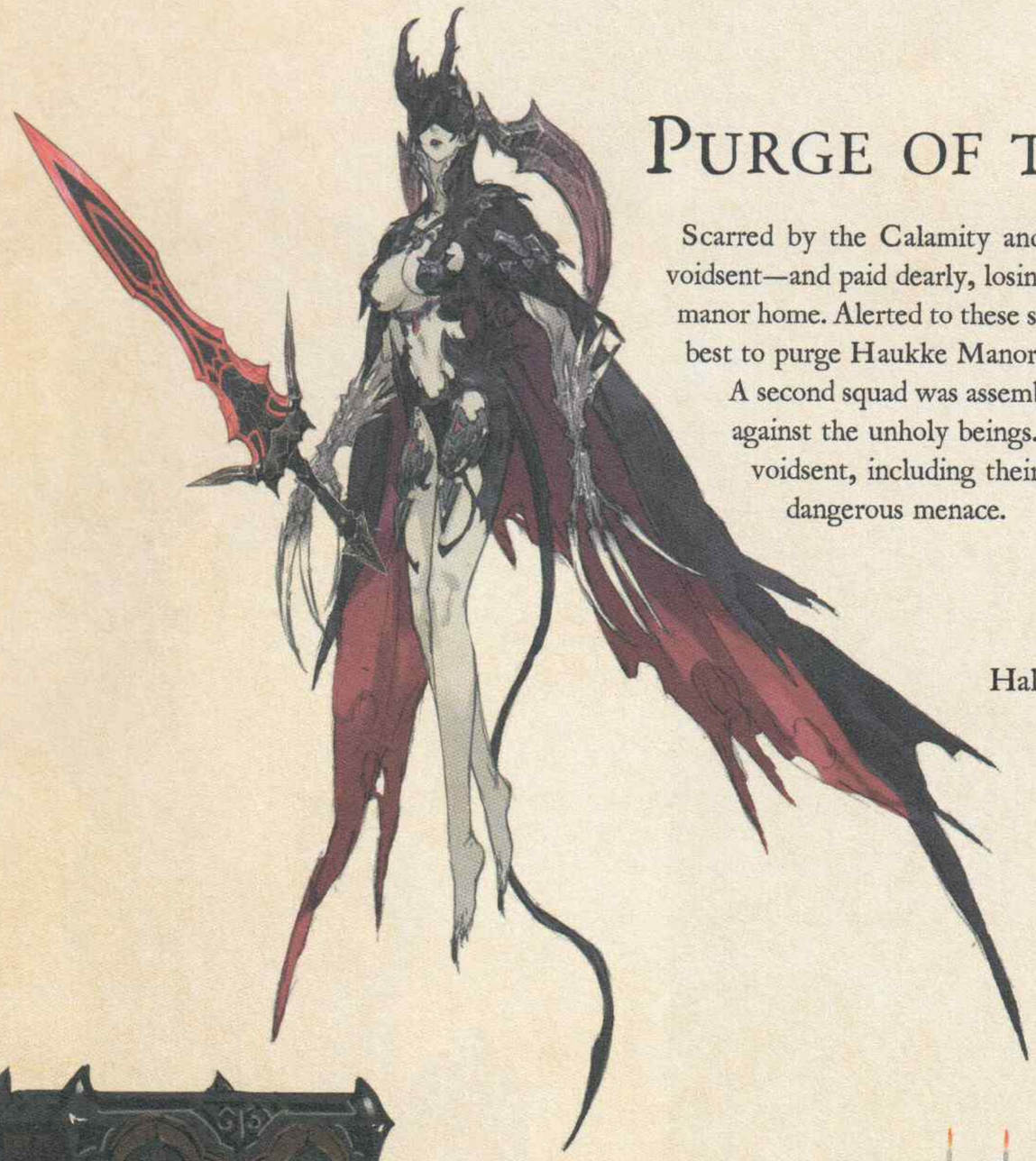
The Manor Steward

Despite leal service to his lady, the manor steward was sacrificed like so many others. Those brave enough to set foot in the manor spoke of spine-chilling scenes of voidsent overrunning the halls, occupying the flesh of servants. From maids to jesters, none were spared.

Purge of the Manor

Scarred by the Calamity and warped by vanity, Lady Amandine made a bargain with a voidsent—and paid dearly, losing her soul and becoming one of the dark creatures haunting her manor home. Alerted to these sinister happenings, the Wood Wailers dispatched a squad of their best to purge Haukke Manor of voidsent. None were seen nor heard from again.

A second squad was assembled, this time comprising adventurers with extensive experience against the unholy beings. These dauntless individuals succeeded in eliminating all of the voidsent, including their leader, Halicarnassus, thereby ridding the Twelveswood of a dangerous menace.



Halicarnassus

A high-ranking voidsent who holds a position of authority among succubi. It bears mentioning that the name Halicarnassus was not her own, but rather one taken from an ancient fable and given by Lady Amandine, a noted bibliophile. This attests to the voidsent's aversion to being under another's power, as they do not readily reveal their true names—not even to those with whom they forge a pact.

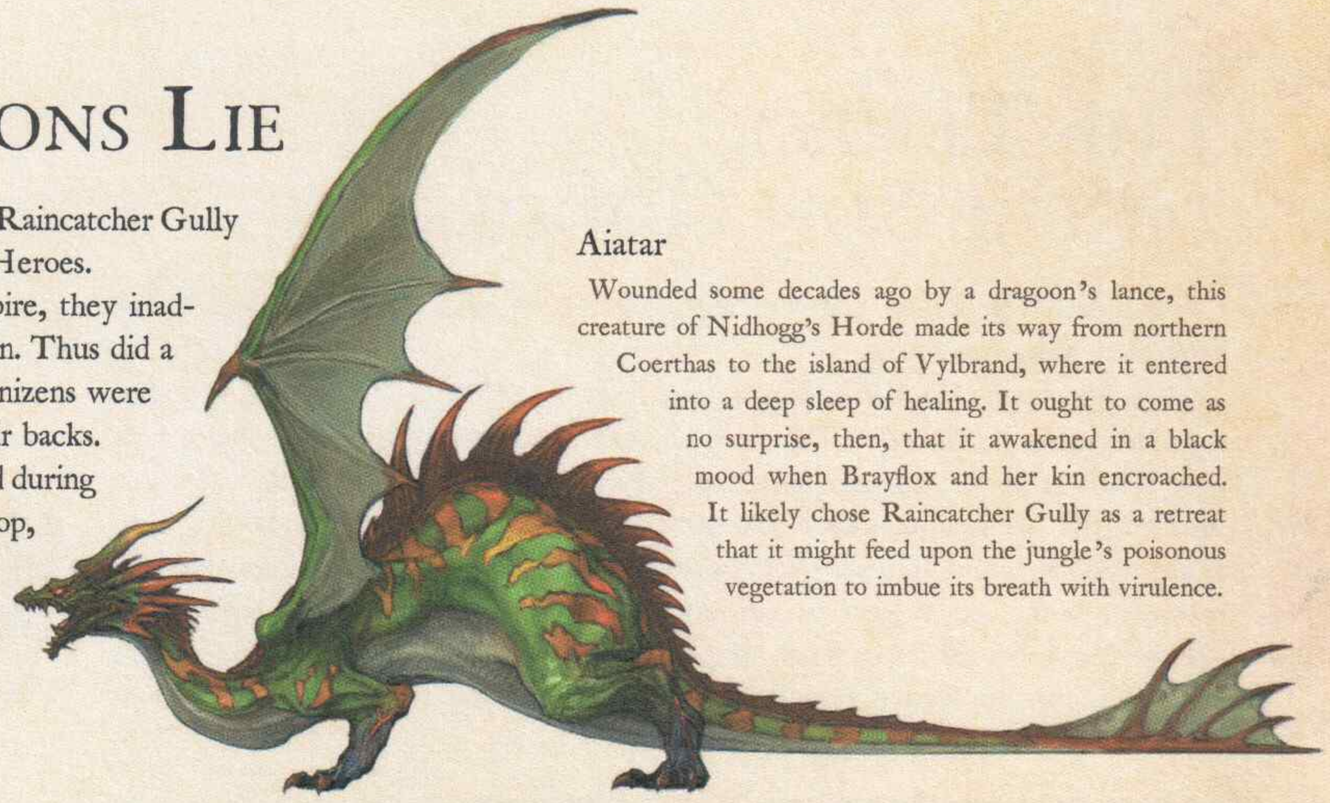
BRAYFLOX'S LONGSTOP

Let Sleeping Dragons Lie

This goblin settlement was established in the lush jungles of Raincatcher Gully by Brayflox Alltalks, a former member of the Company of Heroes.

As she and her brethren labored to expand their tiny empire, they inadvertently did what one must never, ever do: wake the dragon. Thus did a massive, menacing shadow fall over the Longstop, whose denizens were forced to flee with little more than the gobbiebags upon their backs.

Loath to give up their amassed riches, painstakingly acquired during their wanderings, the goblins plotted to take back the Longstop, and they would drag into their brazen plan an adventurer who had come to the settlement on unrelated business.



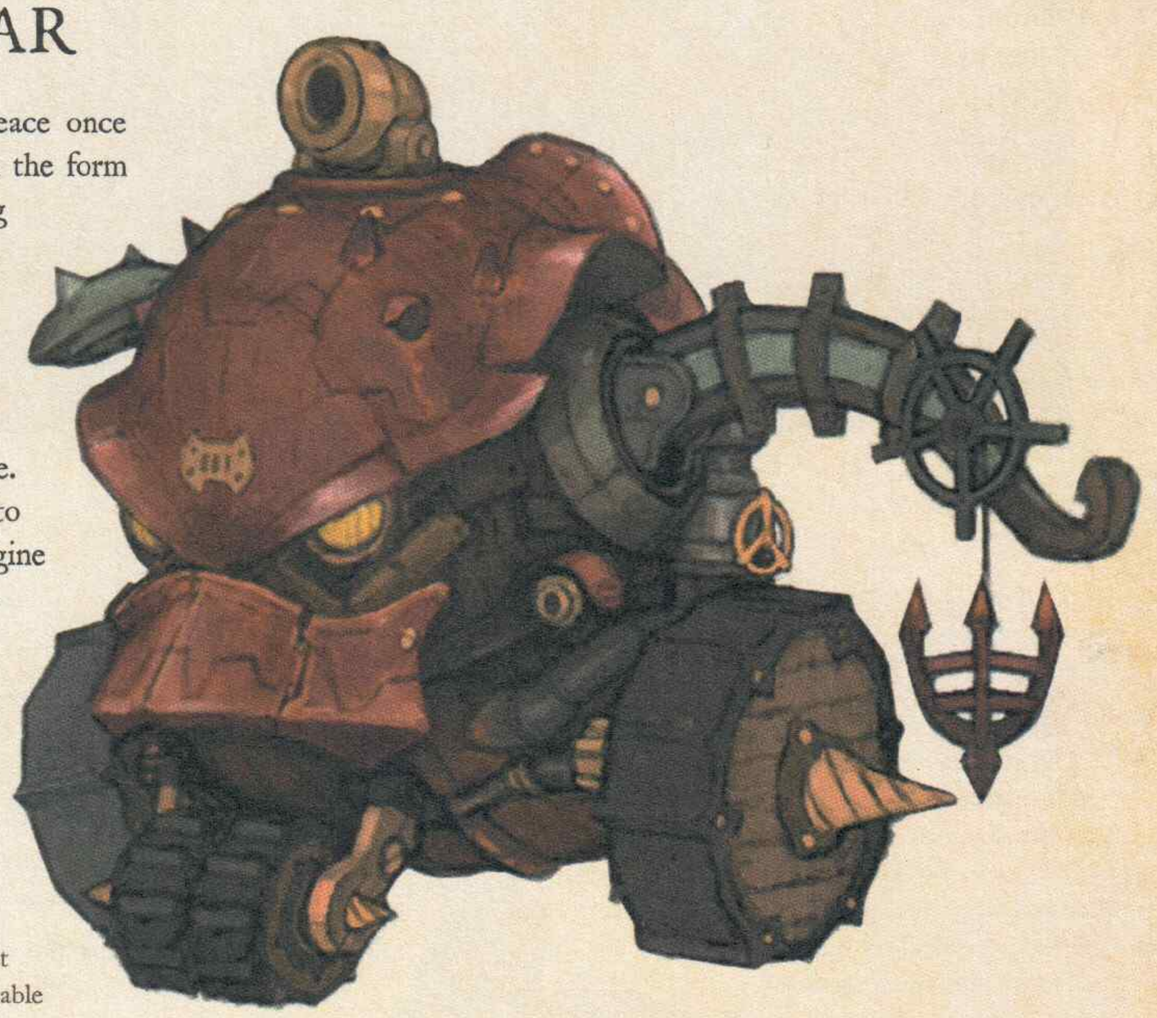
Aiatar

Wounded some decades ago by a dragoon's lance, this creature of Nidhogg's Horde made its way from northern Coerthas to the island of Vylbrand, where it entered into a deep sleep of healing. It ought to come as no surprise, then, that it awakened in a black mood when Brayflox and her kin encroached. It likely chose Raincatcher Gully as a retreat that it might feed upon the jungle's poisonous vegetation to imbue its breath with virulence.

The Goblin Cheese War

With the dragon Aiatar vanquished, Brayflox's Longstop knew peace once more. But that peace was not to last, for trouble soon visited again in the form of the Illuminati, a secretive fraternity of goblin scholars. Deploying their armored unit, they set about laying siege to the settlement, and in desperation Brayflox turned once more to her trusty uplander friend.

Never one to forsake those in need, the adventurer proceeded to deal with the enemy, striking them down to the last goblin...only to learn that the blame for the invasion in fact lay with Brayflox, who absconded with a jealously guarded tome bearing a secret cheese recipe. That being said, the heavy-handed means the Illuminati employed to achieve their ends were also questionable, and one need not strain to imagine the unease the adventurer must have felt to be caught amidst this dispute.



Gobmachine G-VI

Developed by the Illuminati, this war vehicle was originally designed for construction and repurposed for destruction. While it falls short of matching the refinement of imperial machina, boasting stout plates of goblin alloy and a powerful ceruleum engine, it is a remarkable feat of engineering in its own right.

THE SUNKEN TEMPLE OF QARN

The Temple to the Sun Goddess

In the south of sunbaked Thanalan, half devoured by the shifting sands, there lie the ruins of an ancient temple.

Formerly used by the Belah'dians as a place to worship the sun goddess, Azeyma, its construction is credited to Tatamefu II, with further expansion taking place over generations under the auspices of sovereigns such as Lalafuto I, Lalafuto III, and Memeto the Meek. Financial woes, however, put a stop to Lalafuto IV's bid to expand underground, and all such work would be forever ended when a war of succession broke out between two princes and the kingdom was torn in twain.

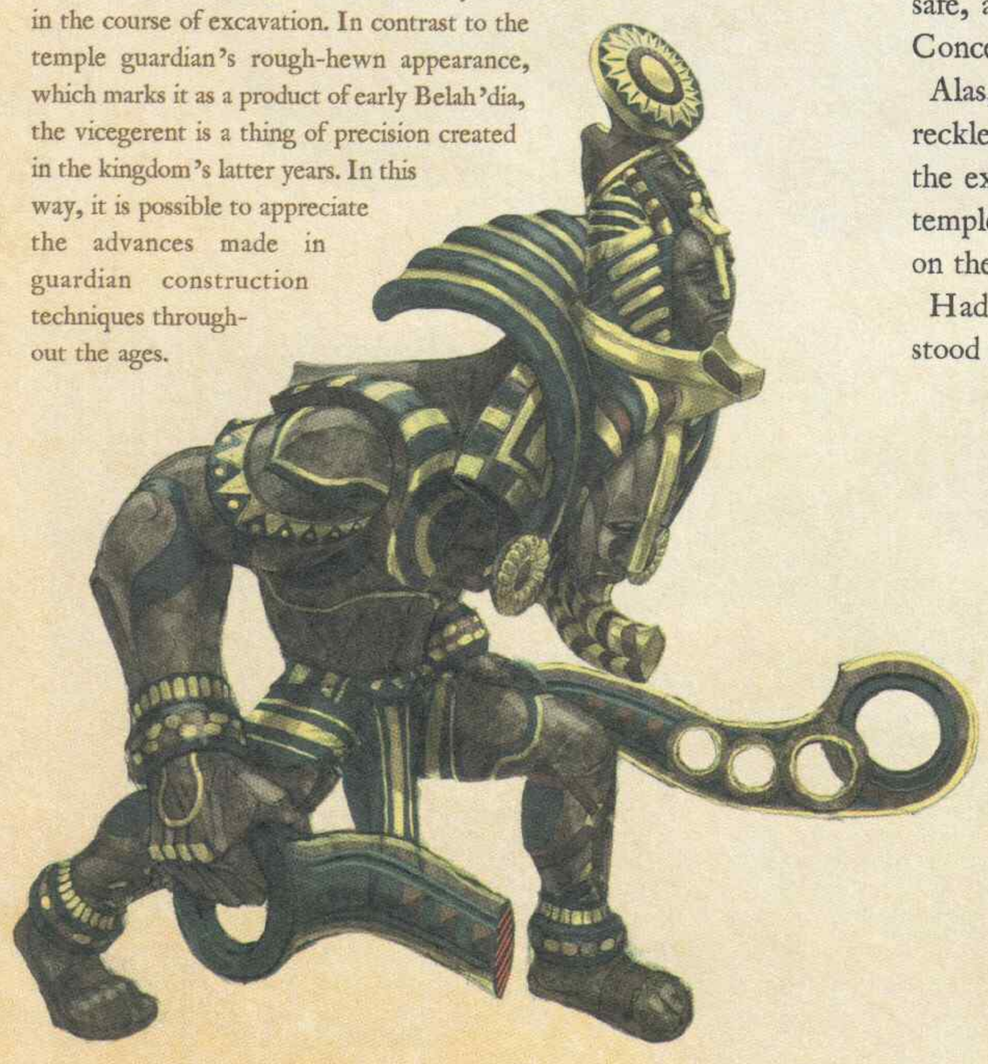
In the years since the fall of Belah'dia, many souls have sought to plumb the temple's mysteries, but the devious traps that riddle its halls have frustrated the efforts of explorers and thieves alike.

Temple Guardian

Brought to life with knowledge inherited from the Mhachi civilization, these guardians of stone dutifully and tirelessly attend to those who would defile the temple. To be spared their attentions, one must bear the cane of a genuine worshiper, but few such implements have survived the passage of time.

Vicegerent to the Warden

This ancient sentinel was accidentally roused in the course of excavation. In contrast to the temple guardian's rough-hewn appearance, which marks it as a product of early Belah'dia, the vicegerent is a thing of precision created in the kingdom's latter years. In this way, it is possible to appreciate the advances made in guardian construction techniques throughout the ages.



The Perils of Nenekko

Owing to the efforts of sure-footed adventurers, the Sunken Temple of Qarn was made safe, and a partnership between the Order of Nald'thal and Amajina & Sons Mineral Concern sent forth a joint expedition to coax out its secrets.

Alas, by then the rumors of hidden treasure had reached the ears of the rapacious and reckless, whose blundering presence in the ruins awakened yet more arcane traps and left the expedition stranded amidst deadly dangers. A team of adventurers familiar with the temple's workings was promptly dispatched to rescue the civilians, with an express focus on the young scholar Nenekko, daughter to the chairman of Amajina & Sons.

Had this mission failed, it is said that the Concern's private army, the Stone Torches, stood ready to mount its own rescue with the entirety of its resources.

CUTTER'S CRY

The Devourer of Darklight

Near an old mountain path used by woodcutters as a detour through the more perilous stretches of northern Thanalan lies a cave sought out only by the ignorant or the foolish. Upon first glance, the shade of its maw might appear inviting to one who seeks to escape the punishing rays of the midday sun. However, any good woodcutter knows to keep his distance, for it is said that those who enter never return—the cries of the damned echoing up from the depths the only testament to their folly.

As the Sixth Astral Era drew to a close, Cutter's Cry claimed for its legend a vaunted name—that of the Darklight Raiders. Hardened warriors all, it was believed that they would make short work of the fiends within, but none would return from that mission save for one man. This survivor, Sibold, spoke of their ill-fated encounter with the dread chimera, who slew all of his comrades, even their inimitable leader, Gerbald the Red. While his memory of the battle was hazy, the creature's disappearance afterwards led some to believe that the Darklight Raiders may have triumphed after all, albeit at a high price.

Years later, following the Calamity, unsettling reports began to emerge that the chimera's spine-chilling growl could be heard deep within the cave once more...

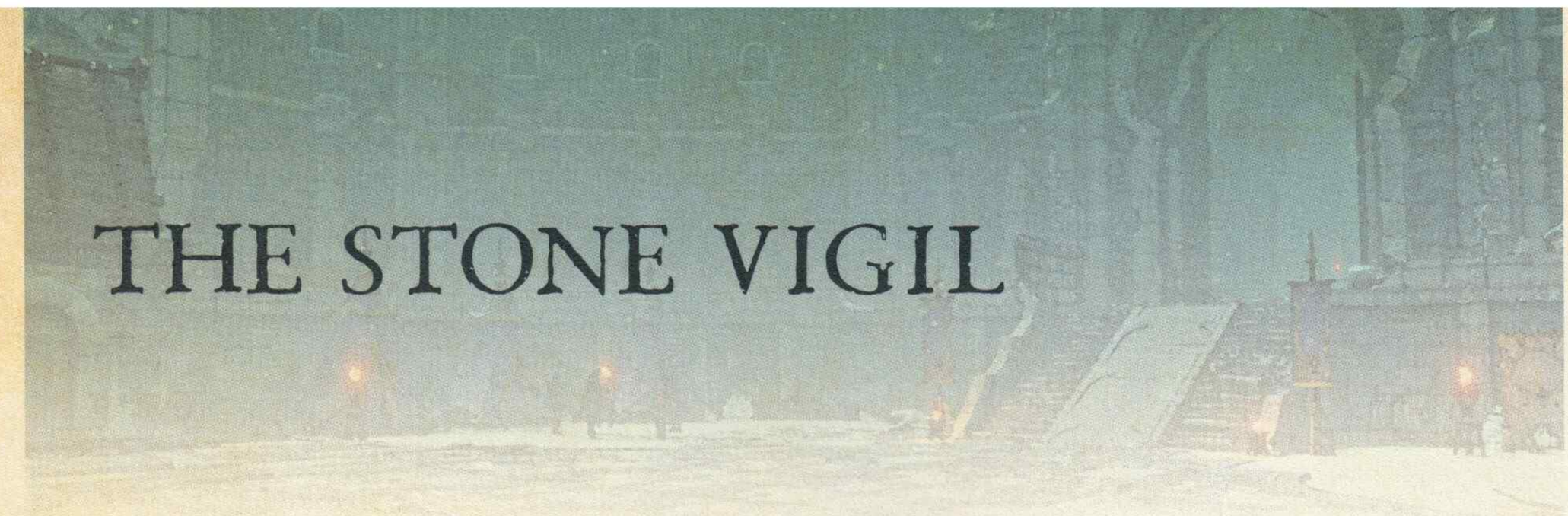
The Chimera

For its insatiable appetite for manflesh, this abominable specimen was given the name "Craver" by woodcutters. Despite suffering grievous wounds in its encounter with the Darklight Raiders, it survived to make a full recovery and resumed its reign of terror. While presumed to trace its origins from the chimerical creations of the Allagan Empire, it is not known how it came to inhabit Cutter's Cry.

The Myrmidon Princess

An antling species native to Thanalan, myrmidon society is centered around a queen. When an heir—the princess—is born, the queen goes into exile, taking half the colony with her, while the rest remain to serve her successor.

Carved splendidly smooth by erosion, the rock formations are a sight to behold, but one would do well not to admire them overlong—lest she become fodder for fell fiends.



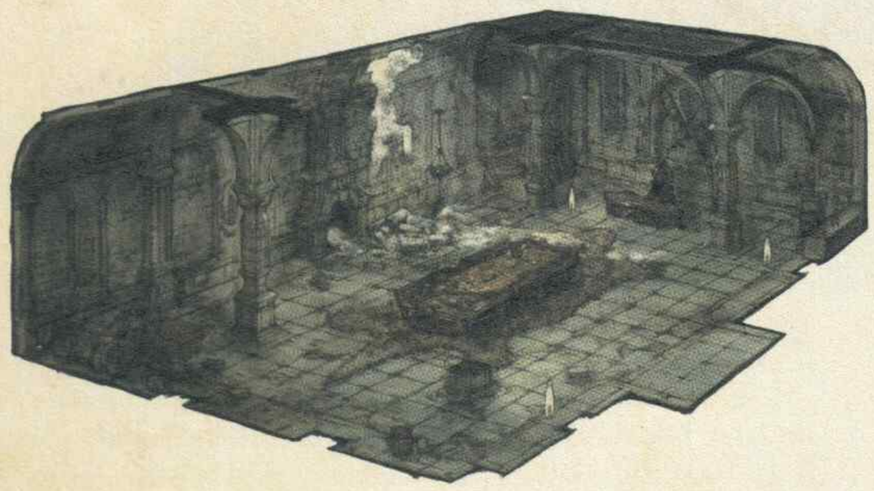
THE STONE VIGIL

Watchman of the Holy See

One of four watchtowers built to serve the Holy See of Ishgard in its war against dragonkind, the Stone Vigil forms a defensive line with the Steel Vigil across the Sea of Clouds, the pair flanking the city as stalwart sentinels. Following the Calamity, however, it was overrun and occupied by Nidhogg's Horde, their presence a sharpened claw upon Ishgard's bared throat.

Under orders from the Vault, House Durendaire commenced a siege to retake the fortress, stationing their knights at Whitebrim Front, but the years passed with nary any progress and the Dravanians remained firmly entrenched.

Prior to these events, seeking to give battle to their enemy in the sky, Ishgard had engaged the assistance of the Garlond Ironworks to develop airships. Hangars were constructed in the Vigil in preparation, and it was there that Cid Garlond left his craft, the *Enterprise*, before the Battle of Carteneau.



Isgebind

A dragon of Nidhogg's brood, Isgebind flew in the main host of the assault on the Stone Vigil. After the stronghold's capture, he was given its command and charged with keeping Ishgard in check. Possessing peerless mastery over ice magicks, he could draw great power from the frigid climes of Coerthas.

Retaking the Vigil

With the heretic in their midst unmasked, the knights of House Durendaire were free once more to fix their sights outward—toward the Stone Vigil. Led by the veteran knight Lord Drillemont, the host succeeded in breaching the gate to find a lodgment within the Vigil, but they could make no further inroads against the enemy's determined defense.

In seeking to break this deadlock, Drillemont turned to a familiar face—the adventurer who had earlier lent his strength against the heretics. While certain factions in Ishgard championed foreign cooperation, that a retainer of the conservative House Durendaire should entreat an outsider's aid was highly irregular. Indeed, the decision to do so was the old knight's alone, made without consulting his superiors. Having been made to know the adventurer's worth, however, he harbored no doubt that his faith was well placed. And this faith would be repaid with a great prize: the Stone Vigil's liberation.

Giruveganaus

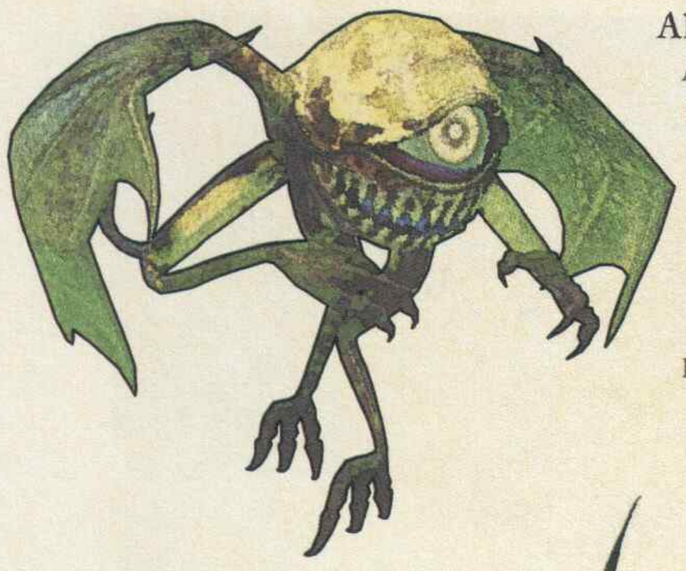
Appearing to be dragons, these creatures were in fact heretics transformed by the secret properties of dragon blood. Others still became syrictae and aevis, and their stationing en masse at the Stone Vigil was likely a Dravanian ploy to have men defend their own fortress. These minions, however, had no answer to another man-made creation—airships—and they yielded to the Ishgardians a critical foothold within the Vigil.

DZEMAEL DARKHOLD

The Count's Ambition

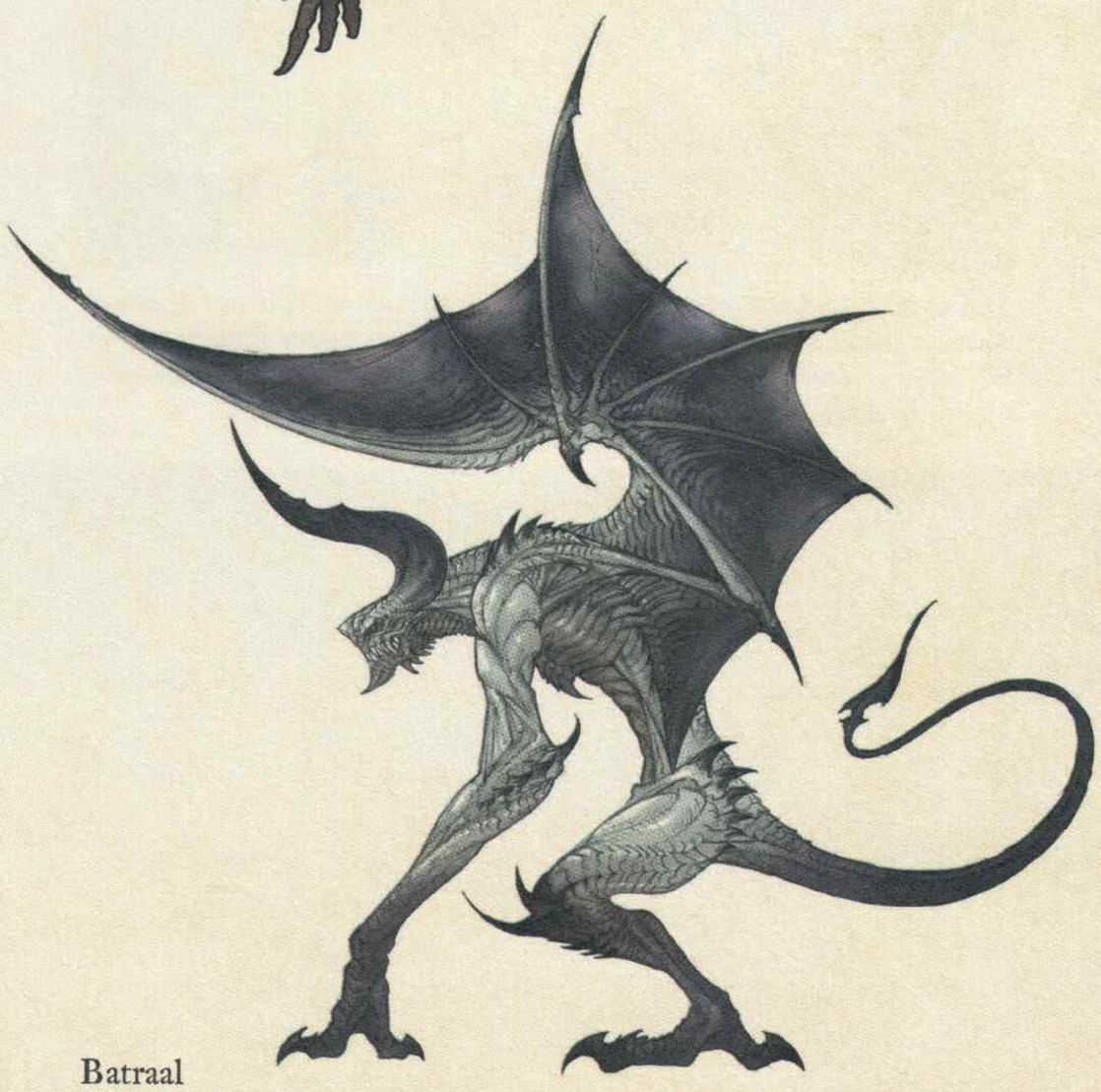
Seeking to utilize an existing labyrinth of natural caves, Count Tarresson of House Dzemael ordered the construction of the Darkhold near the end of the Sixth Astral Era, intending it to serve as a refuge for those fleeing the flames of the Dravanian Horde. When the house's digging uncovered an entrance to the void, allowing an army of voidsent into this realm, however, they were forced to withdraw from the subterrane and suspend their plans. To add insult to injury, imperial troops exploited the confusion to take up positions within the caves.

In a bid to liberate the Darkhold, a young Artoirel de Fortemps assembled his knights at the hamlet of Owl's Nest. Bolstered by the presence of capable adventurers, they succeeded in removing the Garleans, earning the future lord of House Fortemps considerable renown. The voidsent, however, proved considerably more difficult to purge, and after some years at a standstill, the call went out once more for brave souls who might aid in reclaiming the caves once and for all.



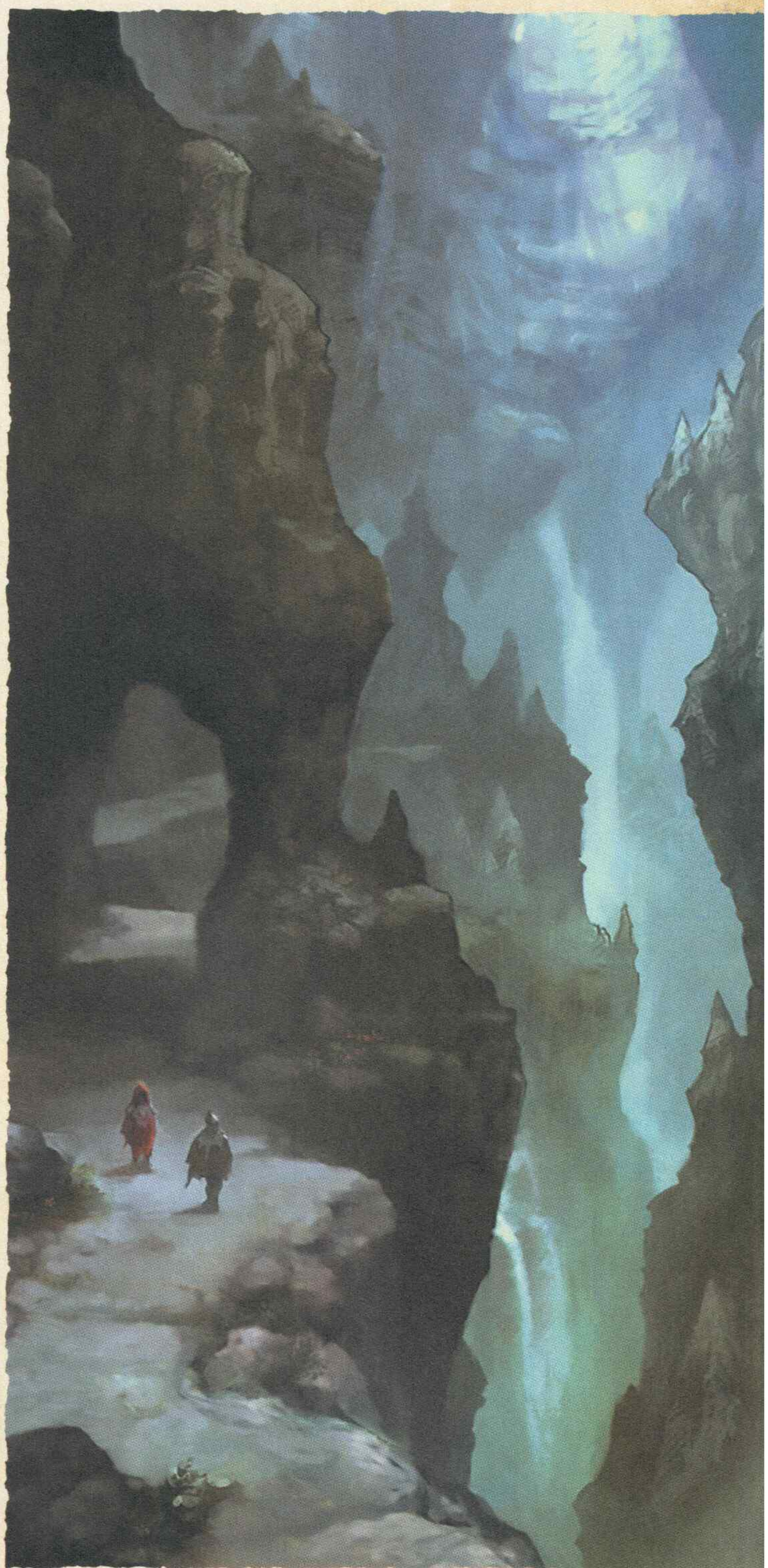
All-seeing Eye

An immense ahriman whose menacing eye seems to strip bare the essence of all things. With but a mere gaze, it is said to call down a curse upon its enemies, while its robust wards stymie the efforts of archers, sending their arrows skittering harmlessly away.



Batraal

In the course of the Darkhold's construction, the workers of House Dzemael discovered and, to their sheer horror, roused a fell gargoyle. A type of voidsent that manifests in the Source by merging its essence with stone, the creature is believed to have occupied a position of power amongst its kind—a fact indicated by the pair of massive blades it brandished. In gargoyle society, such as we understand it, size does appear to matter.



Himself a student of architecture, Count Tarresson de Dzemael had hoped to minimize the cost of building a fortress by taking advantage of a natural cave system. The myriad troubles that beset the Darkhold's construction, however, led to his renouncing his title—under pressure from his sons, if the whisperings amongst Ishgardian nobility are to be believed.

THE AURUM VALE

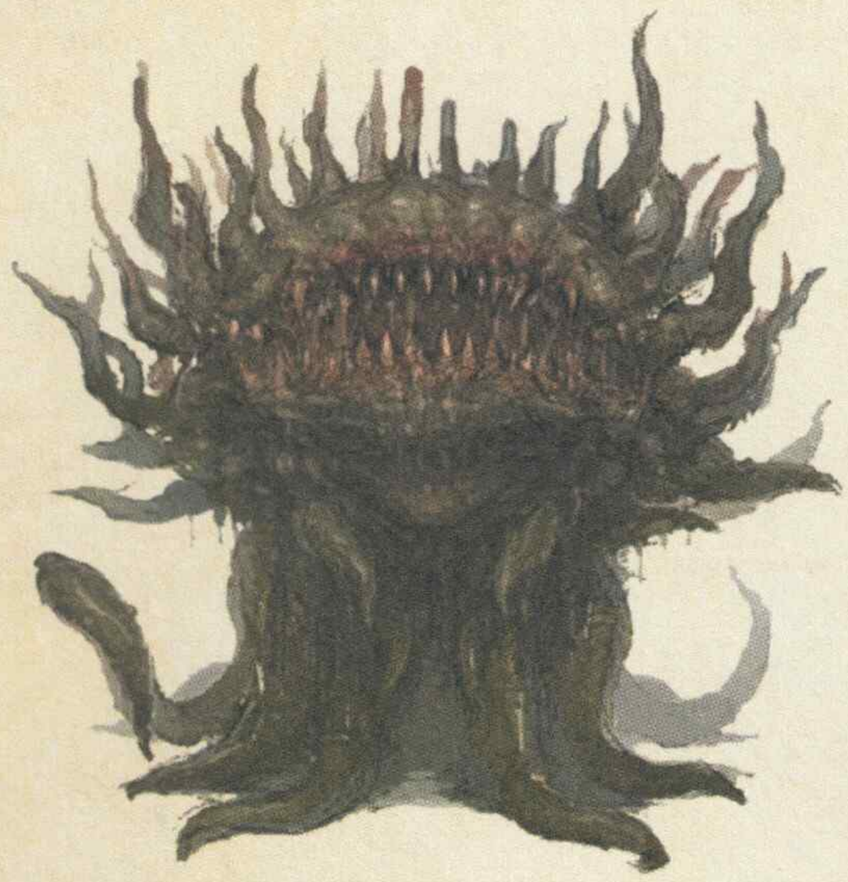
Drowning in Gold

One of the many caverns found in the Coerthas central highlands, known for its glowing pools that give off a golden mist. Though beautiful to behold, the liquid is in fact a lethal seepage called goldbile—the product of a union between sulphur and mythril ore, quickened in groundwater. Drawn by the mesmerizing scenery or the promise of precious aurum, many have unwittingly stumbled into these pools only to have the liquid burn their skin and the noisome fumes cook their lungs.

As if such a place were not sufficiently perilous, prolonged exposure to the fumes wrought an adverse change to the wildlife within, rendering it too dangerous to be left unchecked. Thus did the Holy See of Ishgard petition the three allied city-states to undertake a purge of the Vale in return for the supply of battle-trained chocobos, and the Grand Companies each dispatch a unit of adventurers to see to the task.

The Coincounter

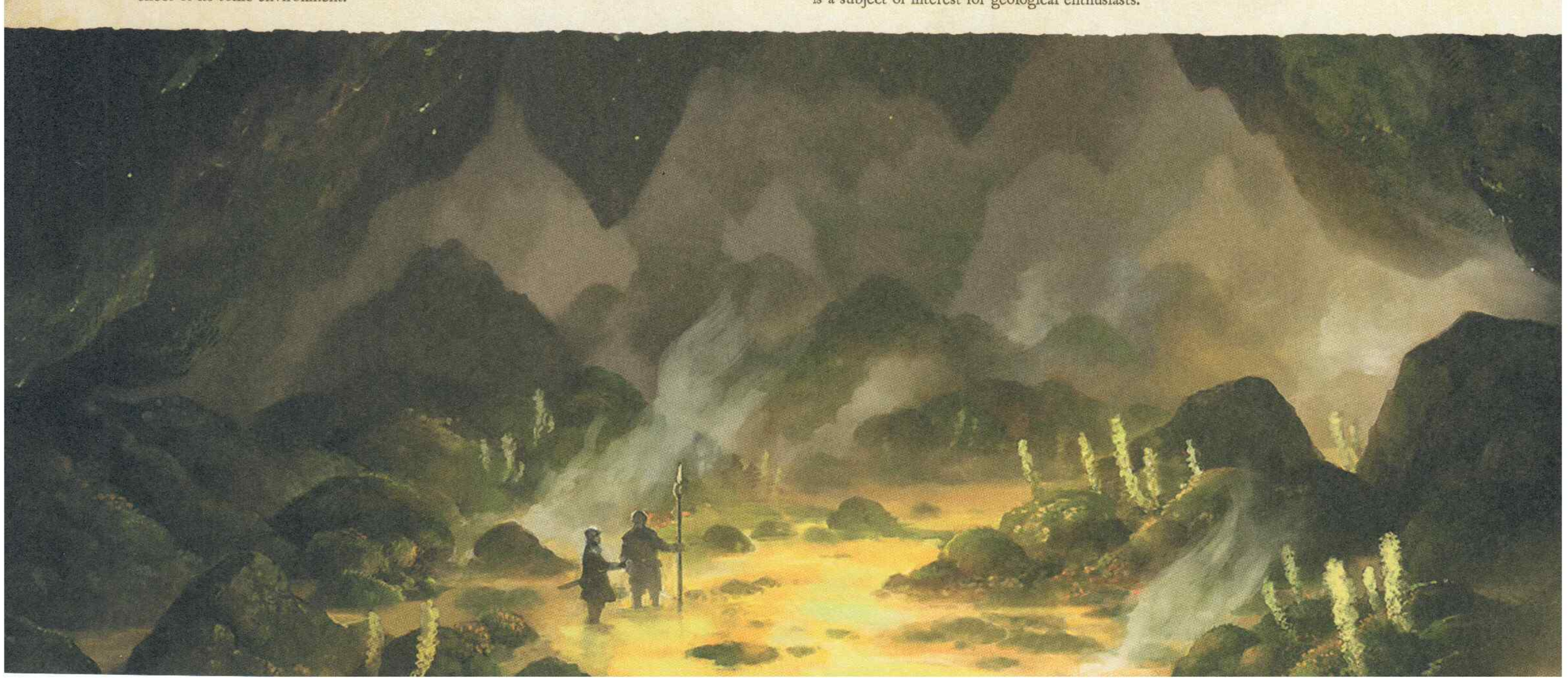
Making its lair in the Aurum Vale, this hulking cyclops attacks all who venture into its territory, giving the impression of a watchdog jealously guarding a golden hoard. For its antics, adventurers have named it the Coincounter.



The Miser's Mistress

If the miser is avaricious, then his mistress is avarice itself. Lording over all in the Aurum Vale, this enormous morbol uses its ever-searching tendrils to seize prey in a rapacious embrace before devouring it whole. While the species is known for spewing forth virulent gas, that which is produced by this specimen is surpassingly potent, an effect of its toxic environment.

Pleasing to behold but excruciating to breathe within, what could otherwise be a scenic wonder to attract visitors the realm over is marred by the presence of noisome fumes. The peculiar ore known as vale bubo, born of the mingling between mythril and sulphur, is a subject of interest for geological enthusiasts.

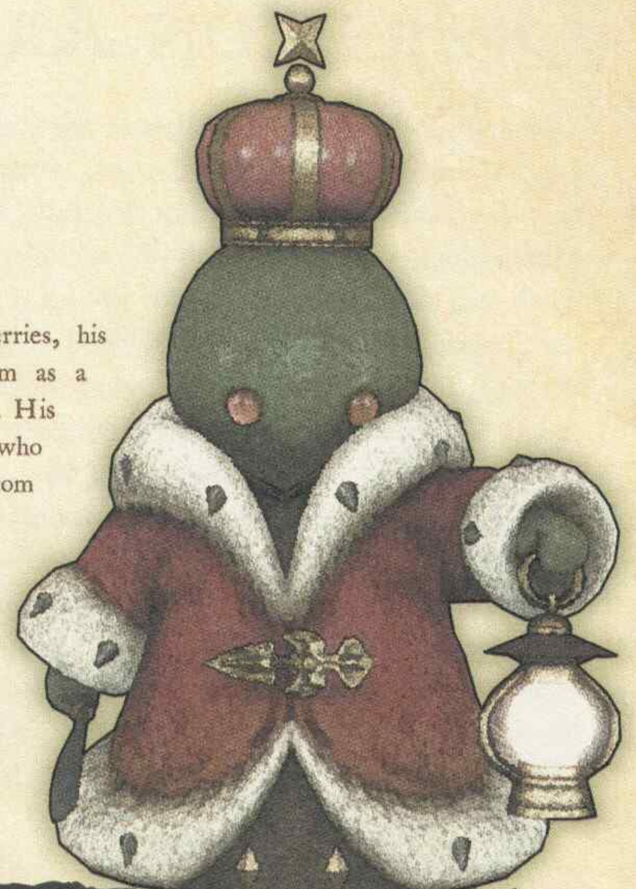


THE WANDERER'S PALACE

The Temple of the Tonberries

Decades of kobold mining deep beneath O'Ghomoro gradually weakened upper La Noscea to the point that, when the Calamity struck, the land surrounding Bronze Lake collapsed, draining its waters and revealing a palace of unparalleled beauty. Thought to have been built by the Nymian civilization, which thrived in the area some fifteen centuries ago, the palace appears to have been dedicated to their patron deity, Oschon, the Wanderer.

In search of the bounty she may hold, adventurers delved into this forsaken place to find it populated by green-skinned fiends the likes of which none had ever seen. Known as tonberries, the creatures were revealed to be citizens of Nym who fell victim to a disfiguring plague—part of a cruel Mhachi plot that unleashed upon them the pestilence-carrying voidsent, Bitoso. As the Fifth Astral Era neared its end, those afflicted were isolated within the Wanderer's Palace, but with no cure in sight and panic gripping the nation, Nymian mages swelled the land's waters, drowning the temple and sealing all of its inhabitants within.



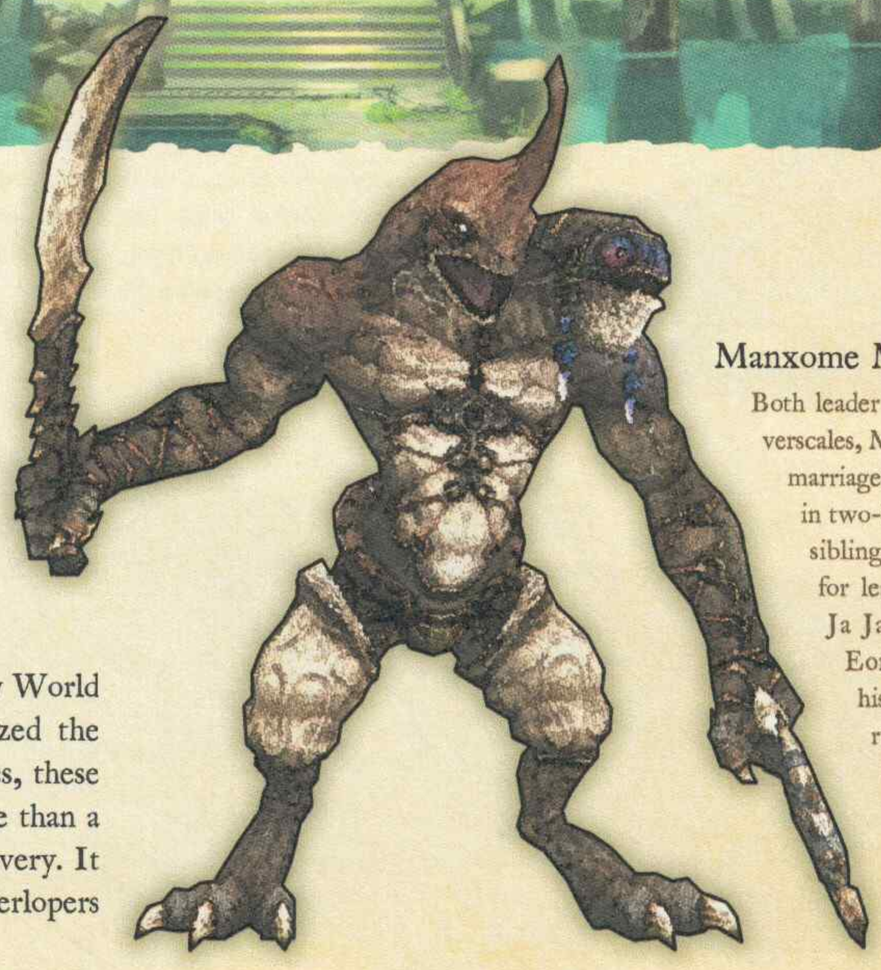
Tonberry King

The leader of the tonberries, his crimson garb identifies him as a former high mage of Nym. His unbridled rage towards those who imprisoned them at the bottom of the lake transformed him into the embodiment of rancor—a rancor that was amplified by his arcane affinity and consumed all of his kind, leaving them mindless vessels of vengeance.

Mamool Ja Occupation

Bound no more by the rancor of their fallen king, the tonberries slowly began to regain their senses—with a little help from devoted friends such as the scholar Surito Carito.

Yet all thoughts of peace were soon put to the blade, as a band of Mamool Ja mercenaries hailing from the New World stormed the walls of the Wanderer's Palace and seized the temple for their own. Calling themselves the Silverscales, these unscrupulous sellswords saw the tonberries as little more than a source of labor and forced the hapless creatures into slavery. It would fall to righteous adventurers to vanquish these interlopers from afar and liberate their thralls.



Manxome Molaa Ja Ja

Both leader and second-in-command of the Silverscales, Molaa Ja Ja was born of an inter-tribal marriage, a union which occasionally results in two-headed offspring. Known as "blessed siblings," these individuals are groomed for leadership from birth; indeed, Molaa Ja Ja's purpose for crossing the seas to Eorzea was to win glory and strengthen his claim to the throne of the Autarch, ruler of all Mamool Ja. Upon arriving, however, he struggled to find employment for his warband, and in a bid to make a name in this foreign land, he took the drastic step of capturing a piece of it.

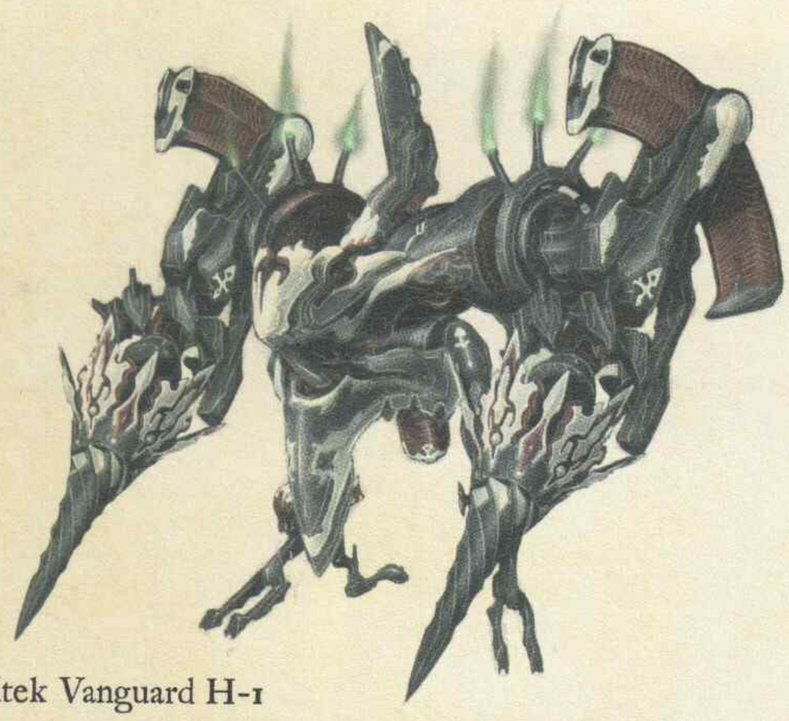
CASTRUM MERIDIANUM

Operation Archon

Exploiting the chaos that followed the Calamity, the XIVth Imperial Legion entrenched itself in Eorzea, establishing strongholds in strategic locations across the realm. Foremost among them was Castrum Meridianum, Gaius van Baelsar's seat of power. Situated in northern Thanalan, the site was chosen for its rich deposits of ceruleum—fuel for the Empire's machina and the lifeblood of its conquest. Upon occupying the area, the legatus ordered the construction of a facility to refine the raw liquid, thereby achieving self-sufficiency for his campaign and ending his dependence on the Garlean motherland.

Struggling simply to rebuild, the nations of Eorzea could only watch on as the castrum's intimidating silhouette took form to dominate the landscape. But years later, the opportunity would come to take action—via the large-scale military strategy dubbed Operation Archon. Bringing all of their resources to bear, the Grand Companies isolated Castrum Meridianum from its sister strongholds with coordinated strikes before turning their eyes upon the main prize. It was a delicate dance that demanded audacity, finesse, and no small amount of luck, but each of the units involved came through to guide the operation to success.

All their efforts were for but one purpose: the destruction of the Ultima Weapon. Once the way was clear for an elite adventurer unit to carry out this task, the Grand Companies withdrew their forces to avoid unnecessary losses. After the dust had settled, the remnants of the XIVth were suffered to remain, but the Black Wolf's legion had effectively been defanged.

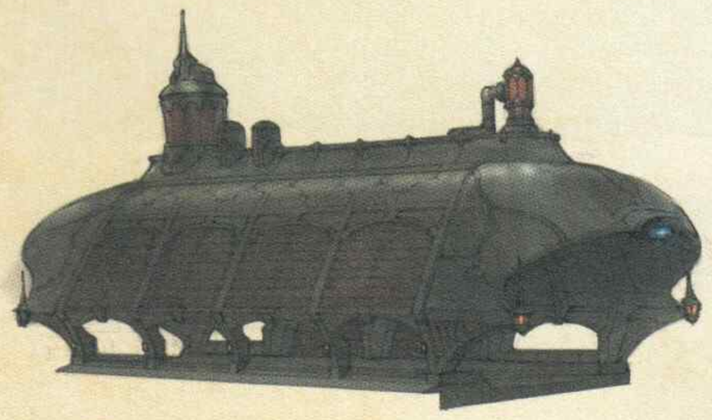


Magitek Vanguard H-1

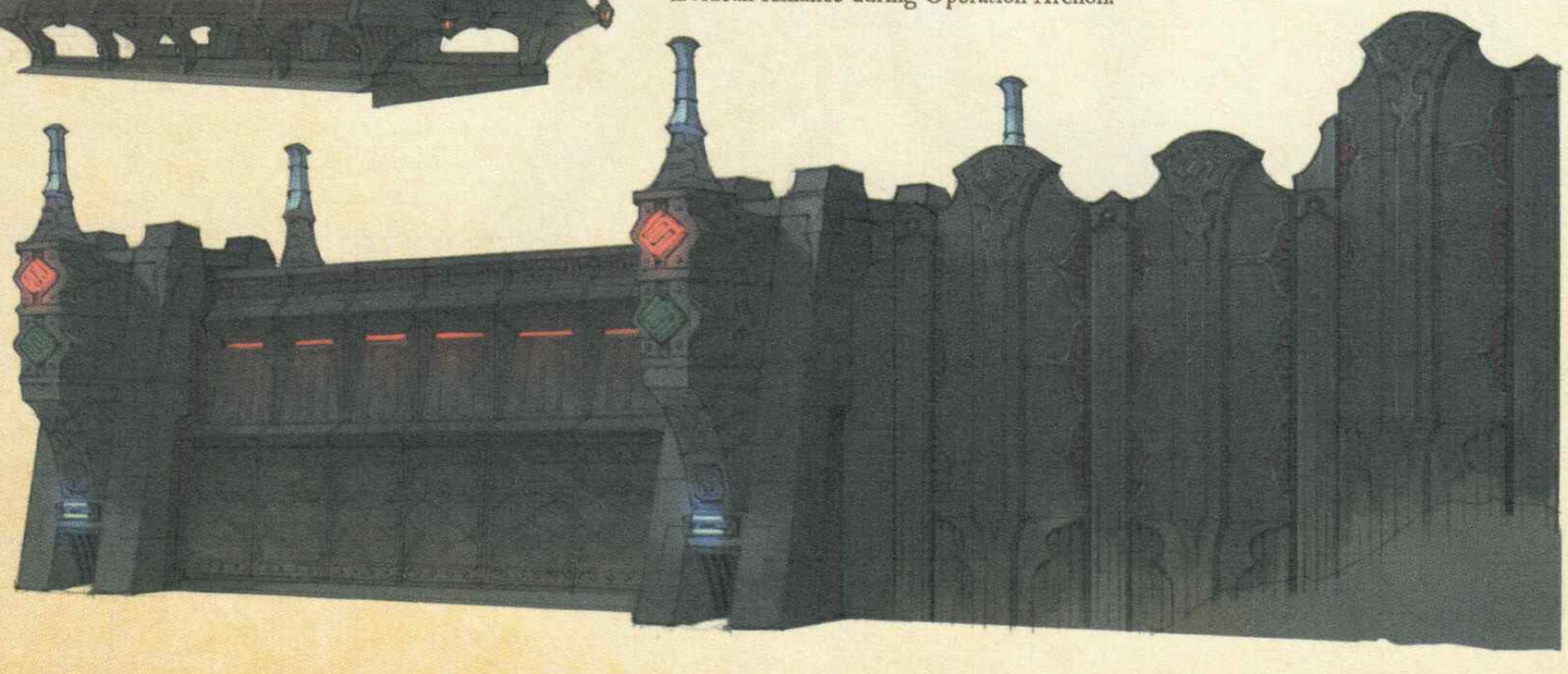
Fitted with additional plate, this heavy variant of the vanguard sacrifices mobility for defense. Though not apparent at a glance, it also boasts a more powerful ceruleum engine.

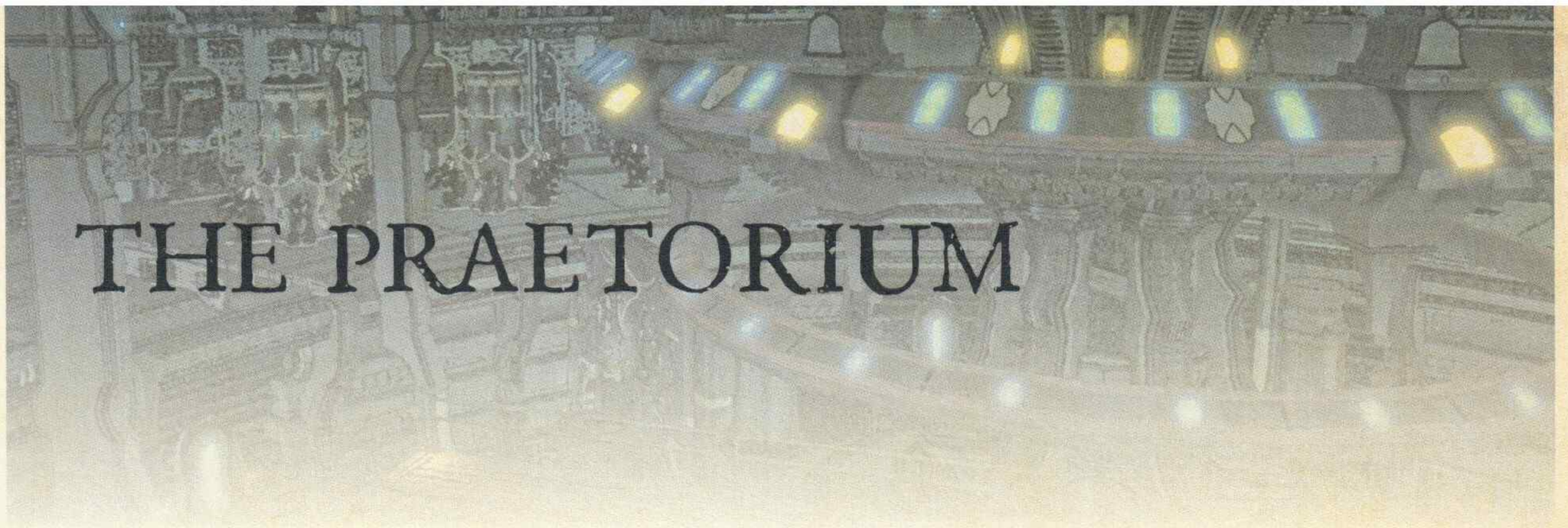
Magitek Colossus Rubricatus

An enhanced version of the autonomous colossus, incorporating an experimental drivetrain that draws upon an external energy source to augment power. The first units manufactured were deployed to guard the Praetorium.



By reproducing the workings of arcane shields with magitek, the Garleans succeeded in enveloping Castrum Meridianum in an energy field that could withstand powerful magical bombardments. In order to defeat such a field, one must either subject it to a tremendous burden or destroy its generator from within, the latter method being undertaken by the Eorzean Alliance during Operation Archon.





THE PRAETORIUM

The Hour of Reckoning

A fortress within a fortress rising at the heart of Castrum Meridianum, the Praetorium houses the XIVth Imperial Legion's command center, wherefrom Gaius van Baelsar directed his army's operations realm wide.

Occupying the underground levels is a magitek research facility headed by Tribunus Nero tol Scaeva, a brilliant engineer responsible for the development of myriad machina of war. Of the many projects to his name, none was more groundbreaking than the revival of the Ultima Weapon. Created to suppress eikons, it was the Black Wolf's key to his conquest of Eorzea—and the Alliance's primary target in Operation Archon.

The Ultima Weapon

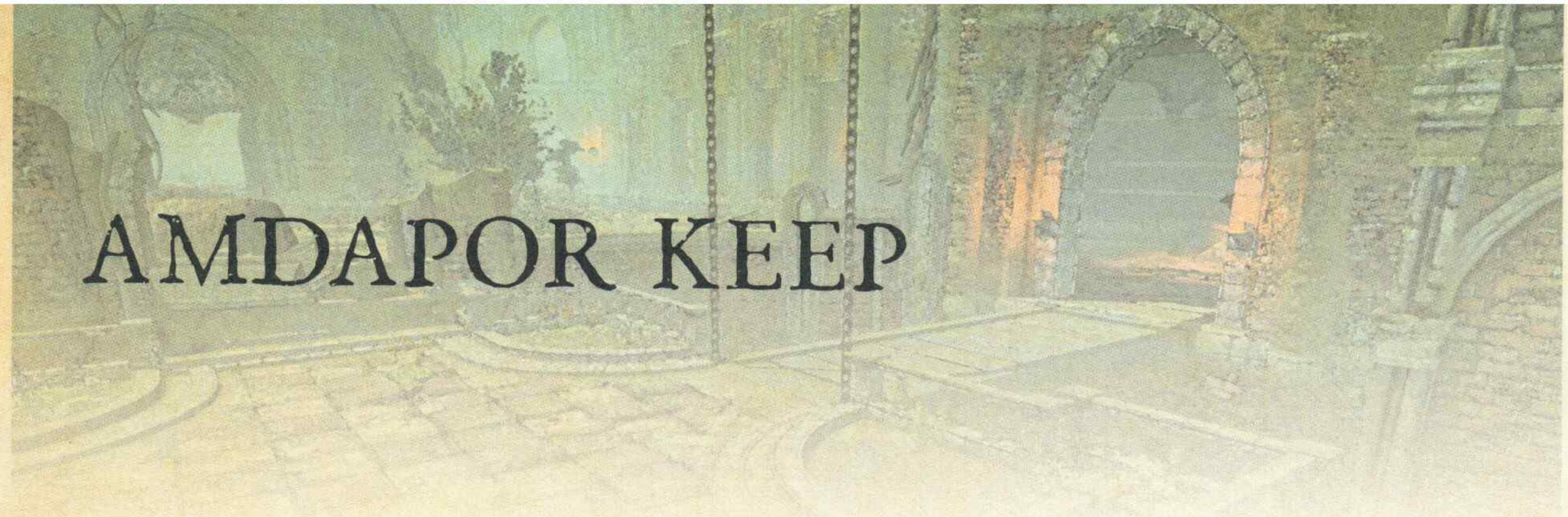
A counter-primal weapon of unparalleled might, the Ultima Weapon is a relic of ancient Allag discovered deep beneath Gyr Abania in a nigh-fossilized state. Through the ingenuity of Nero tol Scaeva, it was restored to working order and made battle-ready, but dark rumors surround its source of power, the Heart of Sabik, which some claim was a gift from the Ascians.

Gaius van Baelsar

Legatus of the XIVth Imperial Legion, known also as the Black Wolf. A masterful general and governor both, his many accomplishments include the conquest and political assimilation of five enemy cities. Fearsome in battle, he personally rose to challenge those adventurers who stormed Castrum Meridianum, wielding his gunblade Heirsbane with deadly effect.

The ancient magick sealed within the Ultima Weapon wreaked untold havoc, tearing open a crater of charred steel. Defeated, Gaius van Baelsar is said to have been consumed by ravenous flames.

AMDAPOR KEEP

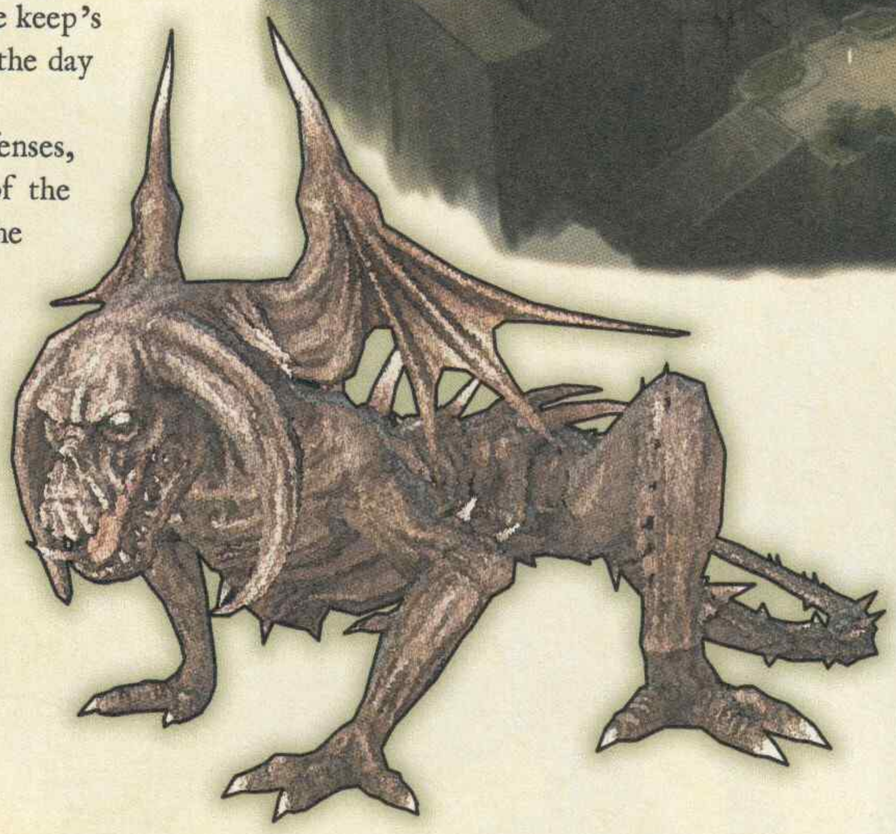


Voices from the Keep

This ancient keep remained hidden in plain sight for generations, cloaked by the magicks of the elementals, until the violence of the Calamity weakened their powers and the glamours eventually failed. Up to that point blissfully unaware of its existence, the citizens of Gridania were shocked when its sprawling ruins suddenly appeared in the middle of the Twelveswood.

Identified as a relic of Amdapor, a Fifth Astral Era nation credited with creating white magic, the keep was likely abandoned in the wake of a devastating attack by their archenemies, the Mhachi. Nonetheless, much of the civilization's ingenuity survived both the carnage and the passage of time to remain in evidence. Aside from their mastery of healing and purification magicks, the Amdapori are noted for their skill at creating arcane entities of stone, the demon wall being a prime specimen. Many such beings served as the keep's guardians in its heyday—and still did so the day it was rediscovered.

Even the presence of such stout defenses, however, did not deter the fanatics of the Lambs of Dalamud, who ventured into the keep and proceeded to use its chambers for their dark rituals.



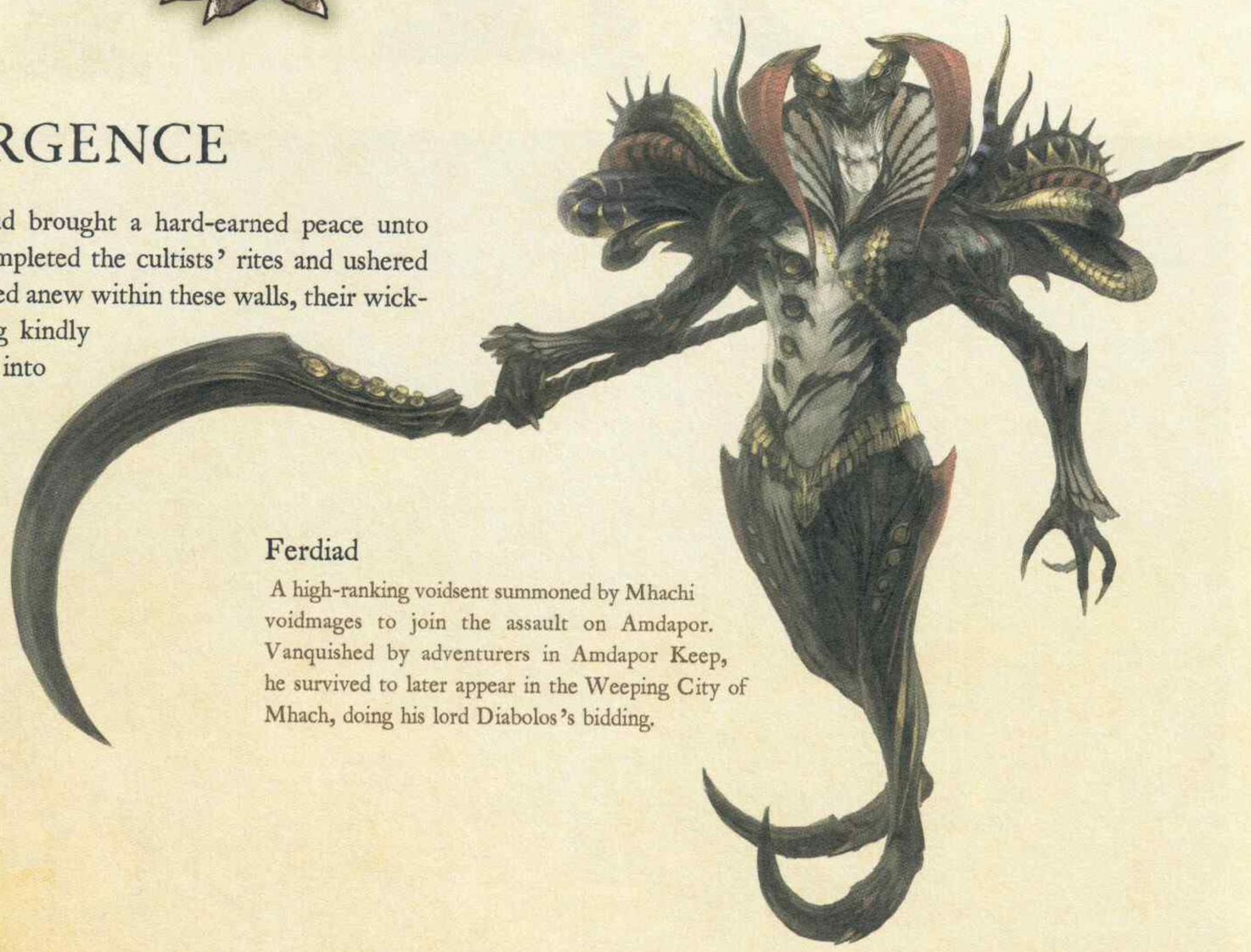
Anantaboga

Inside the keep, the Lambs of Dalamud sought to bind a dread voidsent to their will. The creature was Anantaboga, and it was presumably amongst the void army the Mhachi had sent to lay waste to Amdapor. That it had been sealed away suggests that the white mages fell short of destroying it outright.

Malign Resurgence

Though purging the Lambs of Dalamud brought a hard-earned peace unto Amdapor Keep, some mysterious fiend completed the cultists' rites and ushered shadows back into the ruins. Voidsent reveled anew within these walls, their wickedness warping the flora and transforming kindly woodland creatures, even placid herbivores, into bloodthirsty beasts.

Sensing the disturbance, Seedseer A-Ruhn-Senna bade the Hearer Adestan seek out the selfsame adventurer who had previously conquered the evil within Amdapor Keep that he might repeat his deeds. Most fortuitously, the hero was soon found, and he set forth once more into the ruins to uncover the source of the darkness and rid the Twelveswood of its corrupting influence.



Ferdiad

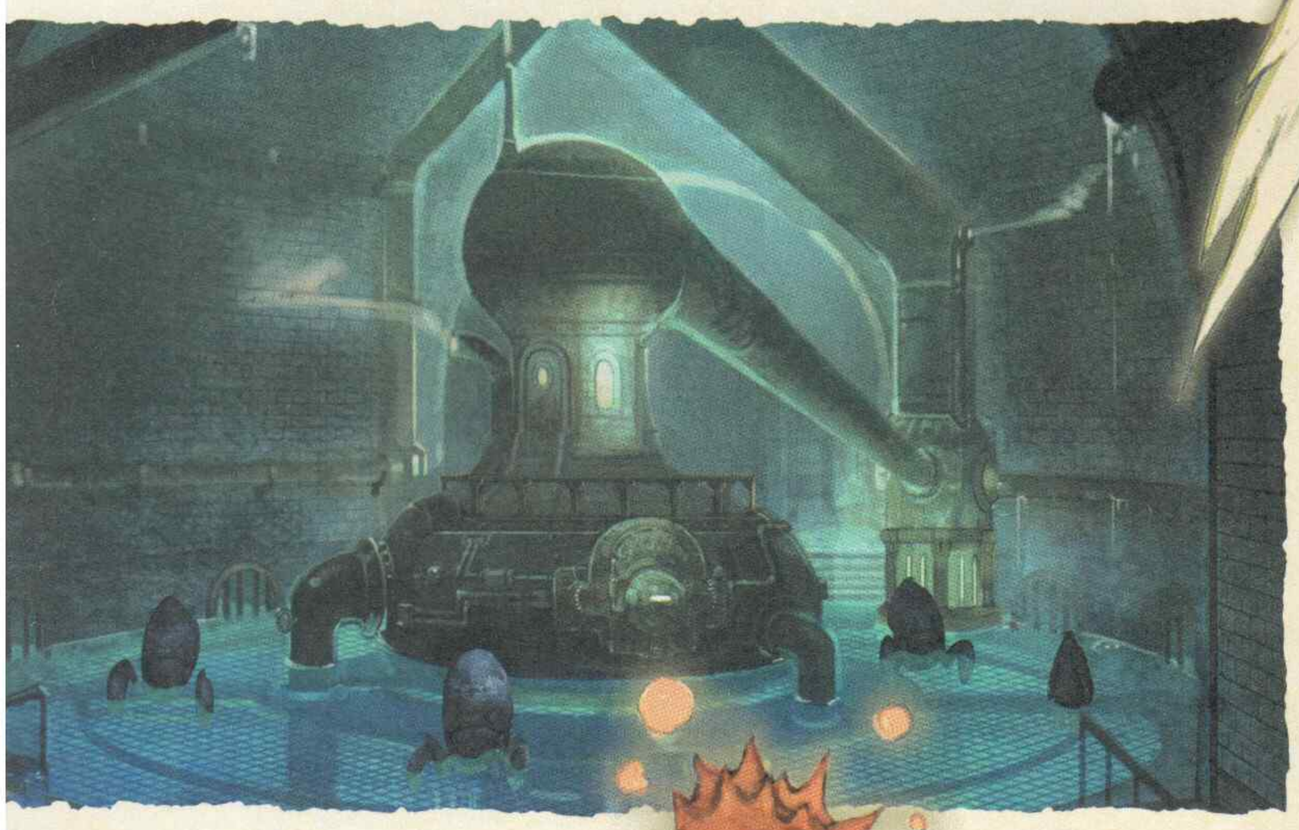
A high-ranking voidsent summoned by Mhachi voidmages to join the assault on Amdapor. Vanquished by adventurers in Amdapor Keep, he survived to later appear in the Weeping City of Mhach, doing his lord Diabolos's bidding.

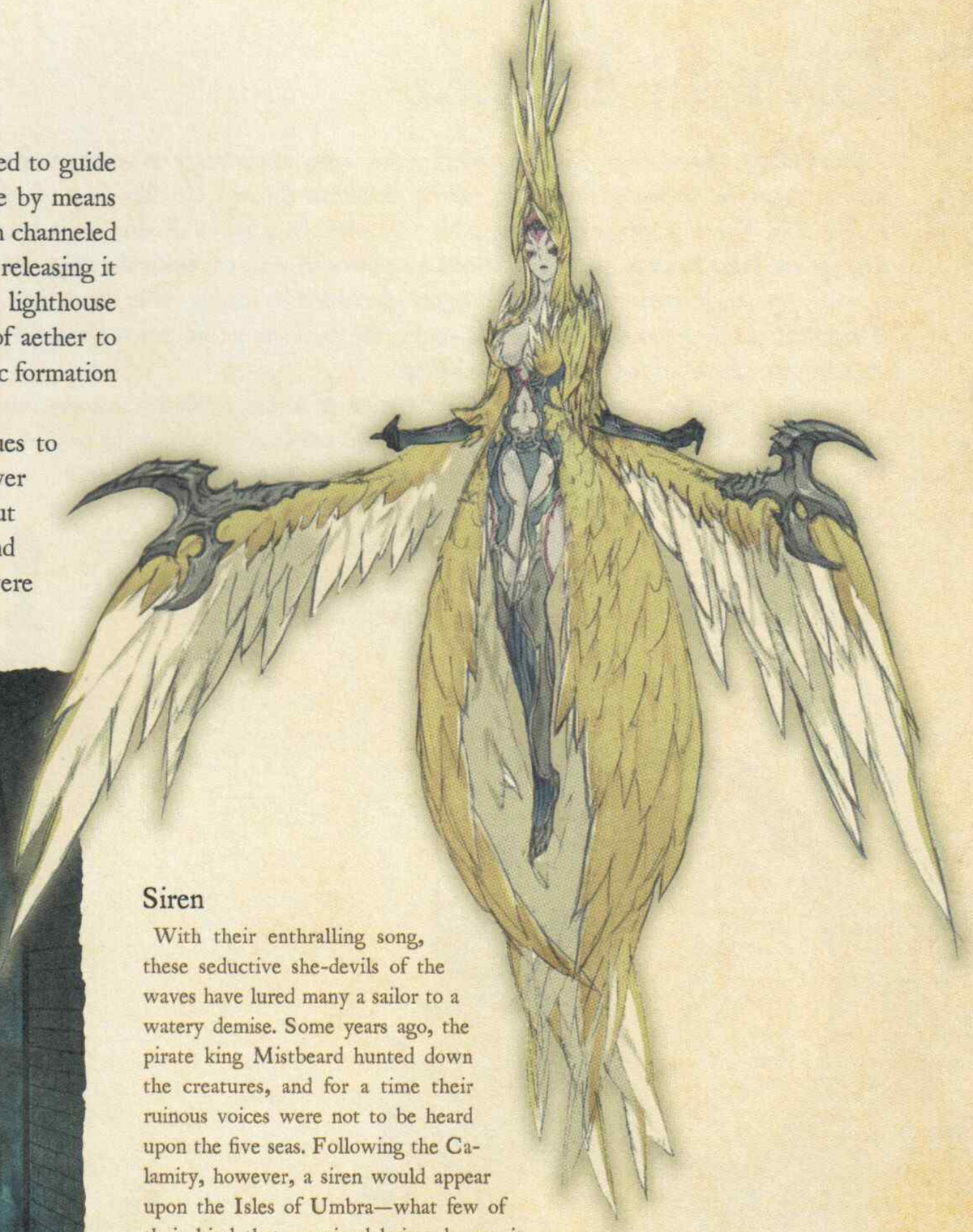
PHAROS SIRIUS

Drawn by the Light

Situated upon the Isles of Umbra, this colossal lighthouse was erected to guide ships safely through the treacherous reefs near Aleport. Its light shone by means of a revolutionary mechanism developed by Naldiq & Vymelli's, which channeled the land's aether into the crystal housed in the beacon chamber before releasing it again. As the Calamity wreaked havoc upon the realm, however, the lighthouse was struck clean through by a hail of fireballs, causing vast amounts of aether to spew forth. That aether solidified all at once, leaving behind the dynamic formation of corrupted crystals that remains lodged in the structure to this day.

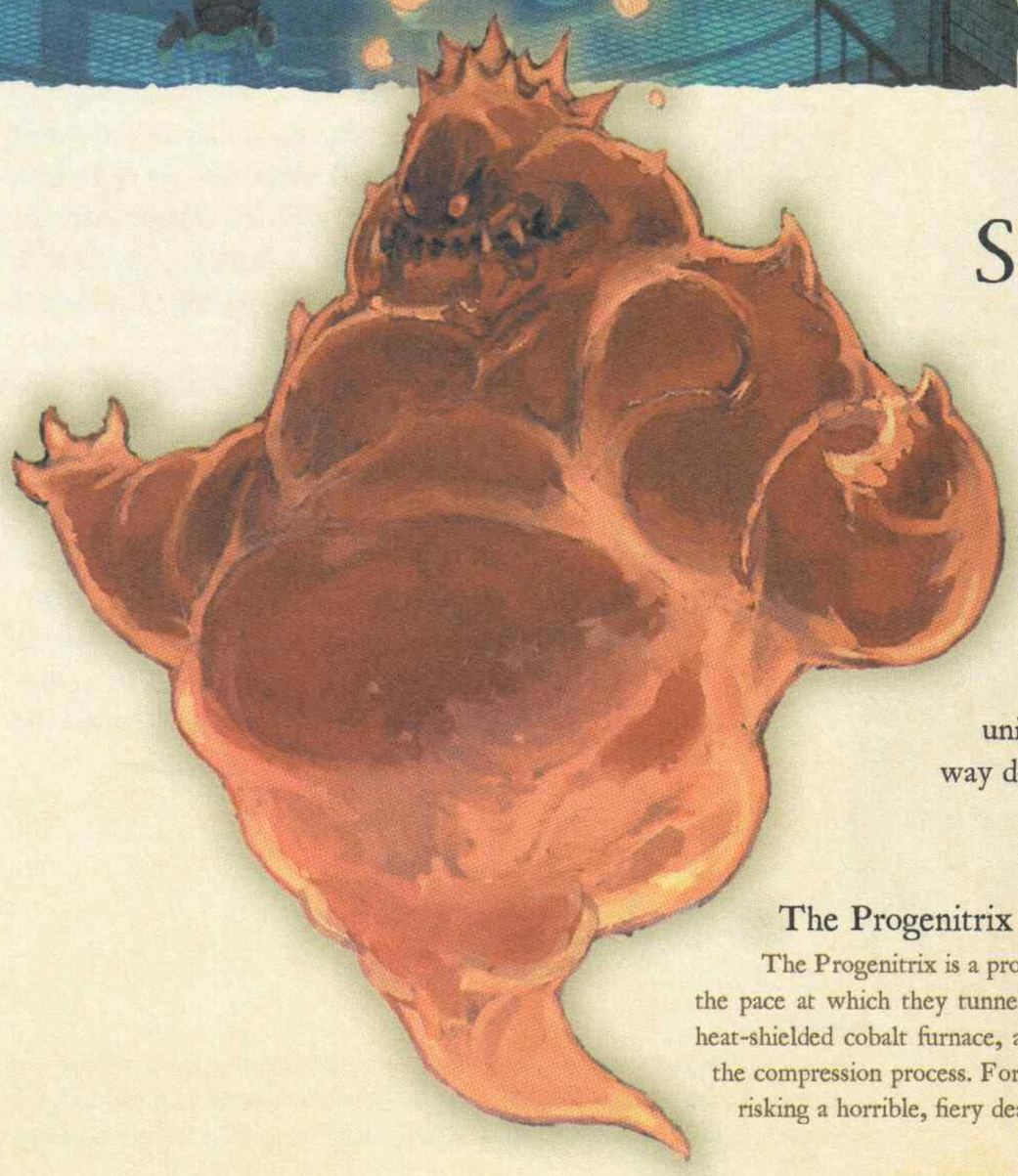
Though its original light has ceased to shine, Pharos Sirius continues to function after a fashion owing to the crystals' glow. Concerns grew over its structural integrity, however, and craftsmen were sent in to carry out repairs—only to be driven out by a dread fiend. A siren of seafaring legend had taken up residence within the lighthouse, and intrepid adventurers were called upon to evict this unwelcome tenant.





Siren

With their enthralling song, these seductive she-devils of the waves have lured many a sailor to a watery demise. Some years ago, the pirate king Mistbeard hunted down the creatures, and for a time their ruinous voices were not to be heard upon the five seas. Following the Calamity, however, a siren would appear upon the Isles of Umbra—what few of their kind that remained being drawn, it would seem, to corrupted crystals.



Subterranean Incursion

With the siren silenced at the adventurers' hands, the restoration of Pharos Sirius could begin in earnest, but it was not long ere trouble arose once more—from the very foundations of the lighthouse. As the men and women of Naldiq & Vymelli's went about their work, they suddenly found themselves overrun by an order of kobolds. In a bid to move their troops into Limsa Lominsa undetected, the beastmen had dug a tunnel stretching from O'Ghomoro, but a miscalculation brought them to the Isles of Umbra instead.

Upon being alerted, the Maelstrom swiftly assembled a small yet capable unit of adventurers. Borne to the beacon chamber by airship, they fought their way down the tower, level by level, and pushed back the forces of the kobolds.

The Progenitrix

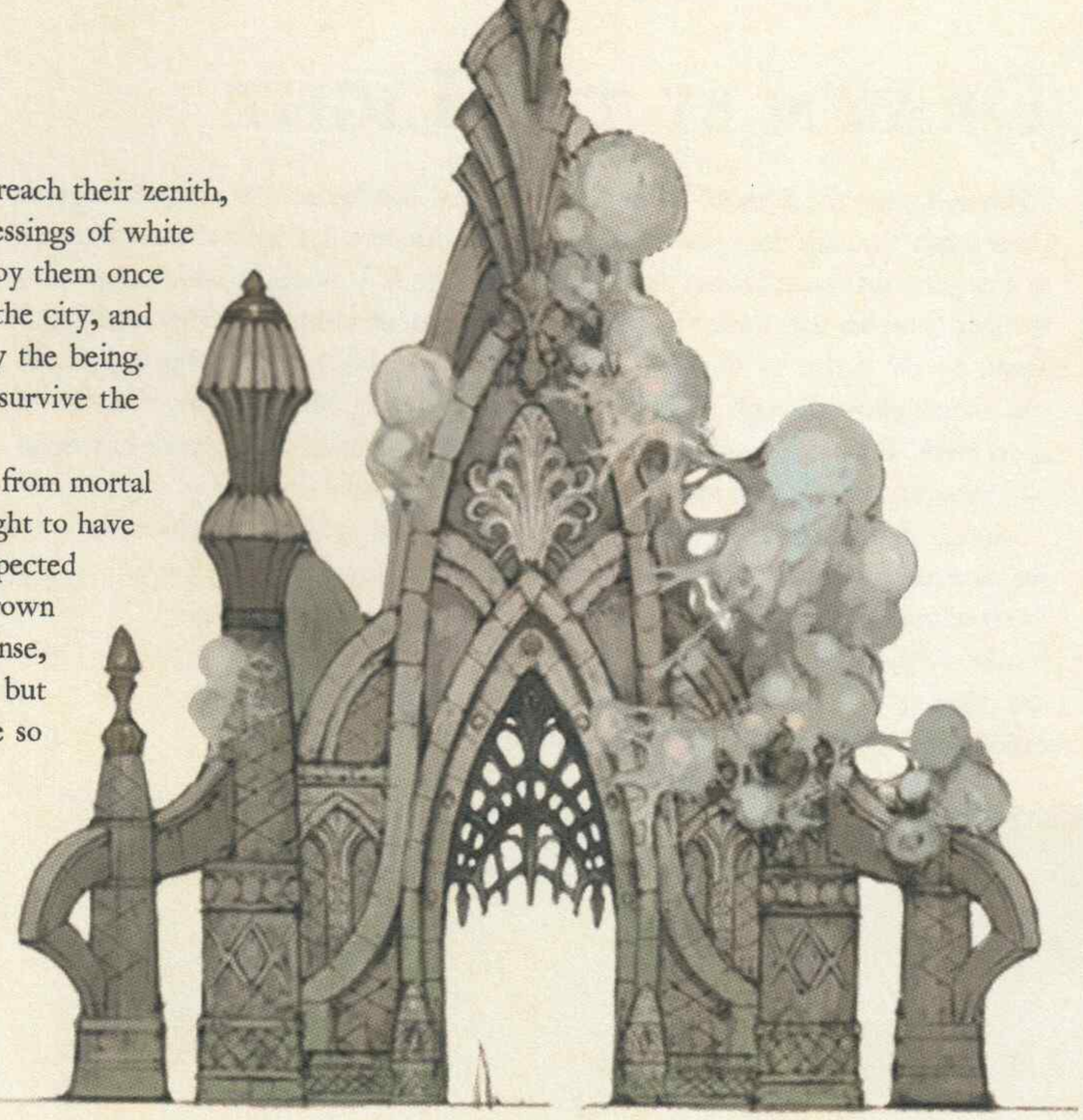
The Progenitrix is a prototype bomb developed by ambitious kobold alchemists seeking to accelerate the pace at which they tunnel the stony hearts of crag and tor. Creating a bomb of this size requires a heat-shielded cobalt furnace, as well as a willingness to accept the possibility of lethal explosions during the compression process. For the kobolds, however, the exponential gain in potency appears to be worth risking a horrible, fiery death.

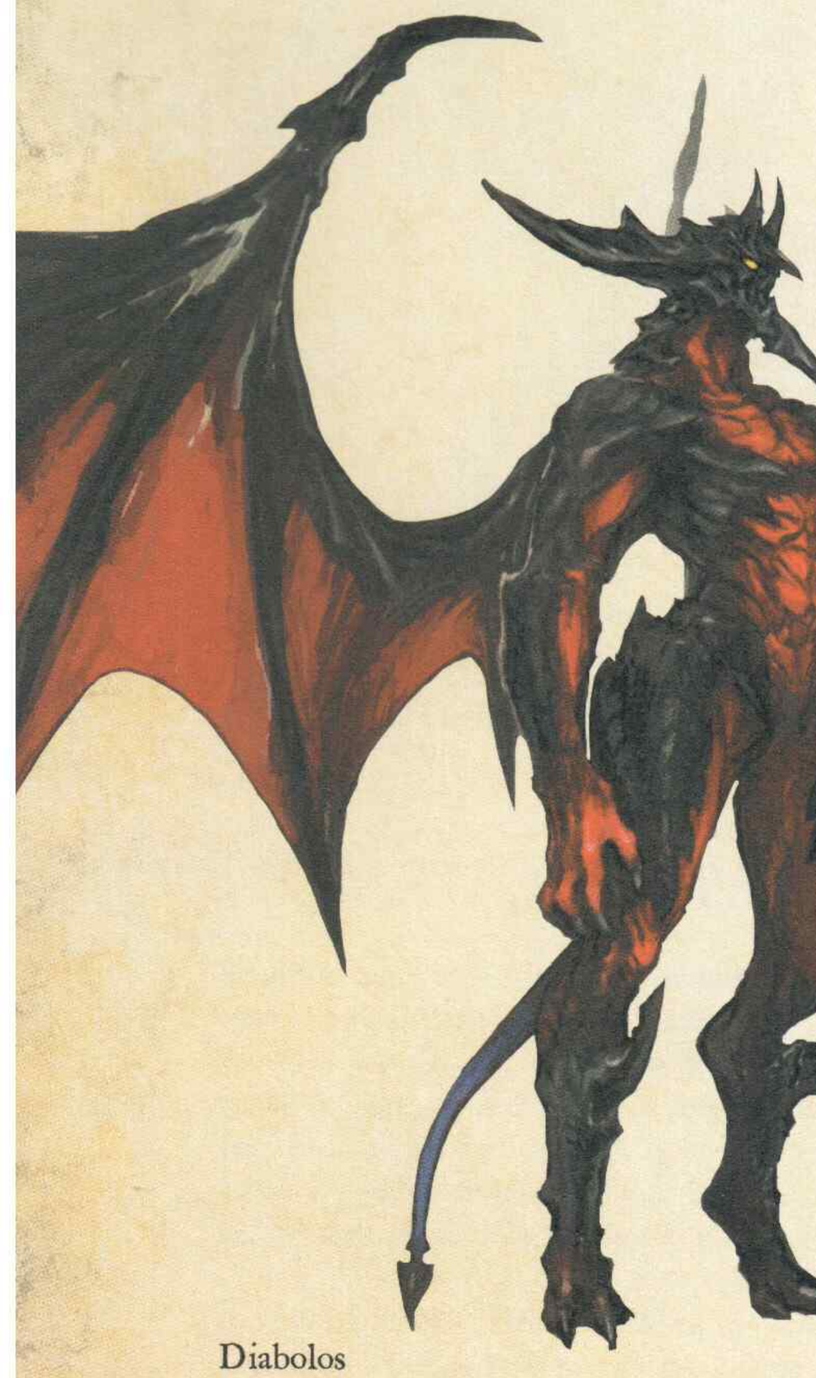
THE LOST CITY OF AMDAPOR

City of Decay

The twilight years of the Fifth Astral Era saw magical civilizations reach their zenith, among them the nation of Amdapor, which prospered through the blessings of white magic. But with this prosperity came a bitter rivalry. In a bid to destroy them once and for all, their Mhachi enemies unleashed a powerful voidsent upon the city, and it was only at great cost that the Amdapori succeeded in sealing away the being. Alas, their home devastated by the onslaught, the civilization did not survive the catastrophic arrival of the Sixth Umbral Era.

Since that time, the elementals had kept the ruins of Amdapor hidden from mortal eyes, but the Calamity weakened the seal to reveal the city, long thought to have been lost. To compound matters, the concurrent dwindling of earth-aspected aether gave rise to a moldering blight that swiftly ravaged the overgrown vegetation within the ruins and threatened to spread without. In response, Seedseer Raya-O-Senna raised a great ward to contain the blight, but the darkness that had begun to stir deep within the city would not be so easily stayed.





Diabolos

Charged with leading the Mhachi's voidsent army against Amdapor, the mighty Diabolos was shorn of power in a desperate counterattack and imprisoned within a potent seal. He awakened centuries later when the Calamity broke the seal's hold, only to be humbled once more by adventurers sent to investigate the ruins, vanishing in a flurry of leathern wings. He would reemerge at the heart of a sinister plot aboard the Void Ark.

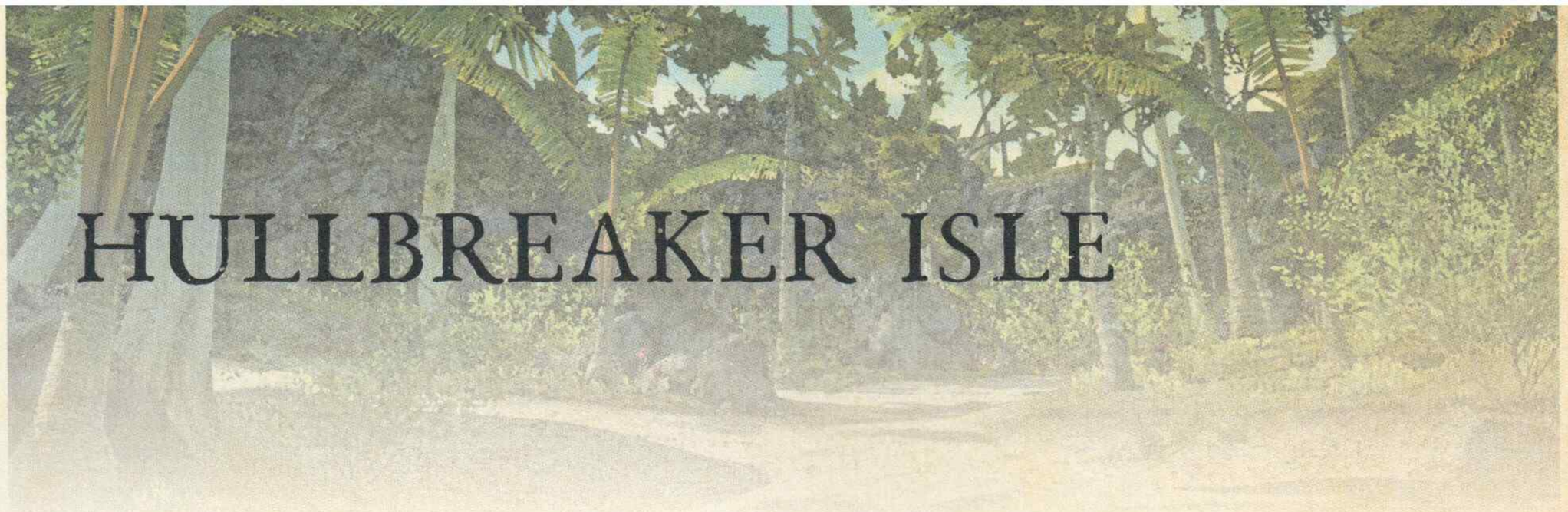
The Last Guardians

Following the defeat of Diabolos, the unnatural pall choking the crumbling city of Amdapor was lifted, and tranquility restored to the Twelveswood. Or so it had seemed. When the Hearers entered the ruins, however, they had scarce begun consigning the stones to the forest when their elemental allies fled in a sudden panic. By the spirits' agitated whispers did the Seedseers learn that a daunting and hostile presence yet lingered within Amdapor's moldering walls.

Unable to complete their ritual of cleansing, once more the Padjals called upon the aid of fearless adventurers, who set out to bring this unknown evil to light. And what should they find inside the ancient city's husk but the stone guardians of the Amdapori, roused to life by the awakening of a voidsent, their mortal foe. The adventurers laid these relics to rest, and thus did the city sleep soundly once more.

Kuribu

Created by Amdapori magi to protect their city, this winged golem is animated by gems infused with the power of white magic. To better contend with voidsent, it is said to have been made in the image of transcendent beings from yet another plane.



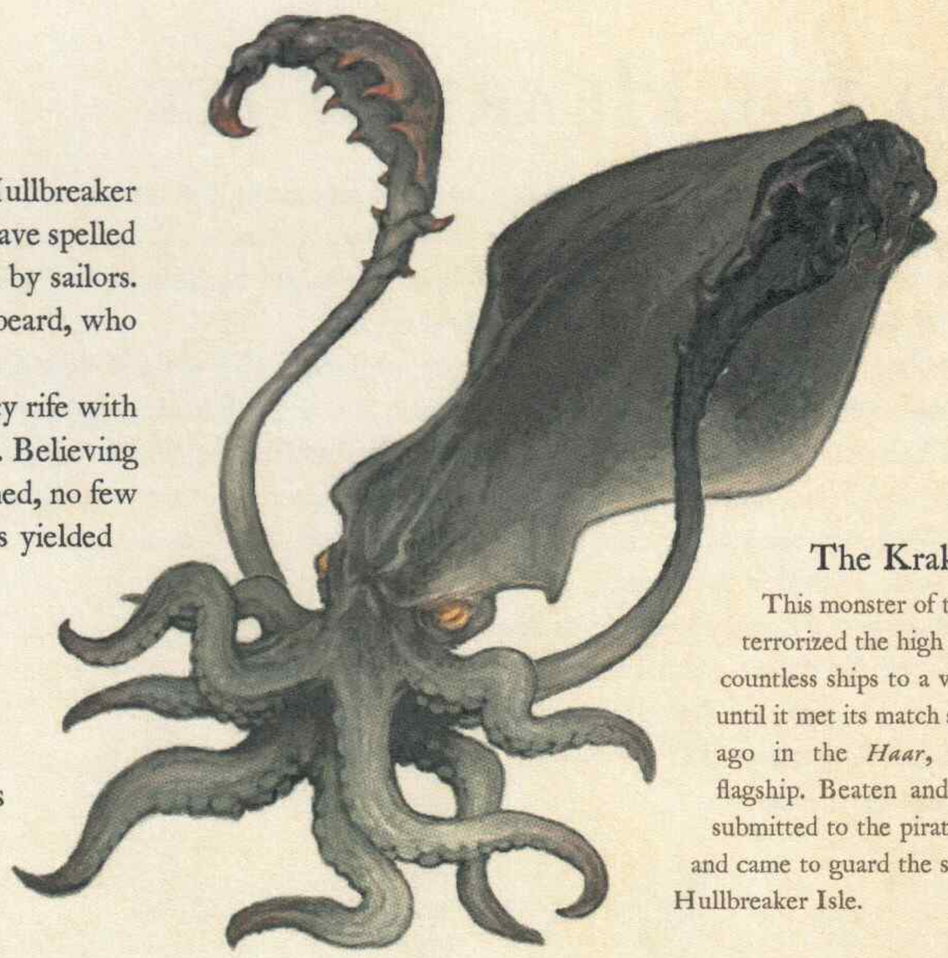
HULLBREAKER ISLE

Mistbeard's Treasure

Upon the Rhotano Sea, along the fringes of the Cieldalaes, there lies Hullbreaker Isle. Shrouded in the perpetual mist of the Doxy's Pull, its jagged reefs have spelled the end of many a ship, and the place has long been given a wide berth by sailors. These selfsame hazards, however, served to attract the pirate king Mistbeard, who availed himself of the isle for his hideout.

Last seen two and twenty summers prior, the pirate left behind a legacy rife with rumors—not the least of all those pertaining to his accumulated plunder. Believing that his fabulous cache still lay somewhere out there, waiting to be claimed, no few pirating crews feverishly devoted themselves to the hunt, but the years yielded not so much as a single coin, and gradually the fever passed.

Recently, however, the fires of desire were rekindled when, on a rare mistless day, a merchant vessel inadvertently sailed into the area to find not only the isle, but the wreck of the *Haar*, Mistbeard's flagship. Thus did the race begin anew, with treasure hunters the realm over scrambling to be the first to reach the elusive isle and lay their hands upon the pirate king's cache.



The Kraken

This monster of the deep long terrorized the high seas, sending countless ships to a watery grave, until it met its match some decades ago in the *Haar*, Mistbeard's flagship. Beaten and subdued, it submitted to the pirate's authority and came to guard the secret cove at Hullbreaker Isle.

Grand Storm Marshal Eynzahr Slafyrsyn

Eynzahr serves as the Maelstrom's second-in-command and presides over the daily affairs of its headquarters—a mundane life beside the one he once led as the pirate king Mistbeard some two decades ago. For but a moment he relived those days, donning the mask of his former persona in battle against the Warrior of Light.

A New Legend

To the chagrin of countless treasure hunters, the golden coffer of the legendary Mistbeard was not to be found on Hullbreaker Isle. And so like the mists which had withdrawn to reveal the isle did those ambitious souls depart to seek fame and fortune elsewhere, allowing Eynzahr Slafyrsyn to quietly petition Admiral Merlwyb for permission to repurpose it as a training ground for Maelstrom recruits.

For the first to brave this gauntlet of the isle's fearsome fauna and the Maelstrom's elite, the storm marshal sought out the vaunted Warrior of Light. But events took an unexpected turn, for word of the hero's participation soon reached the ears of Limsa Lominsa's hardest men and women, and the likes of Carvallain of the Kraken's Arms and Rhoswen of the Sanguine Sirens flocked to the isle in hopes of winning a famous victory over the champion of Eorzea. So it was that the cast and crew were assembled and the curtains rose upon a new legend of Hullbreaker Isle.

SNOWCLOAK

Into the Heart of Ice

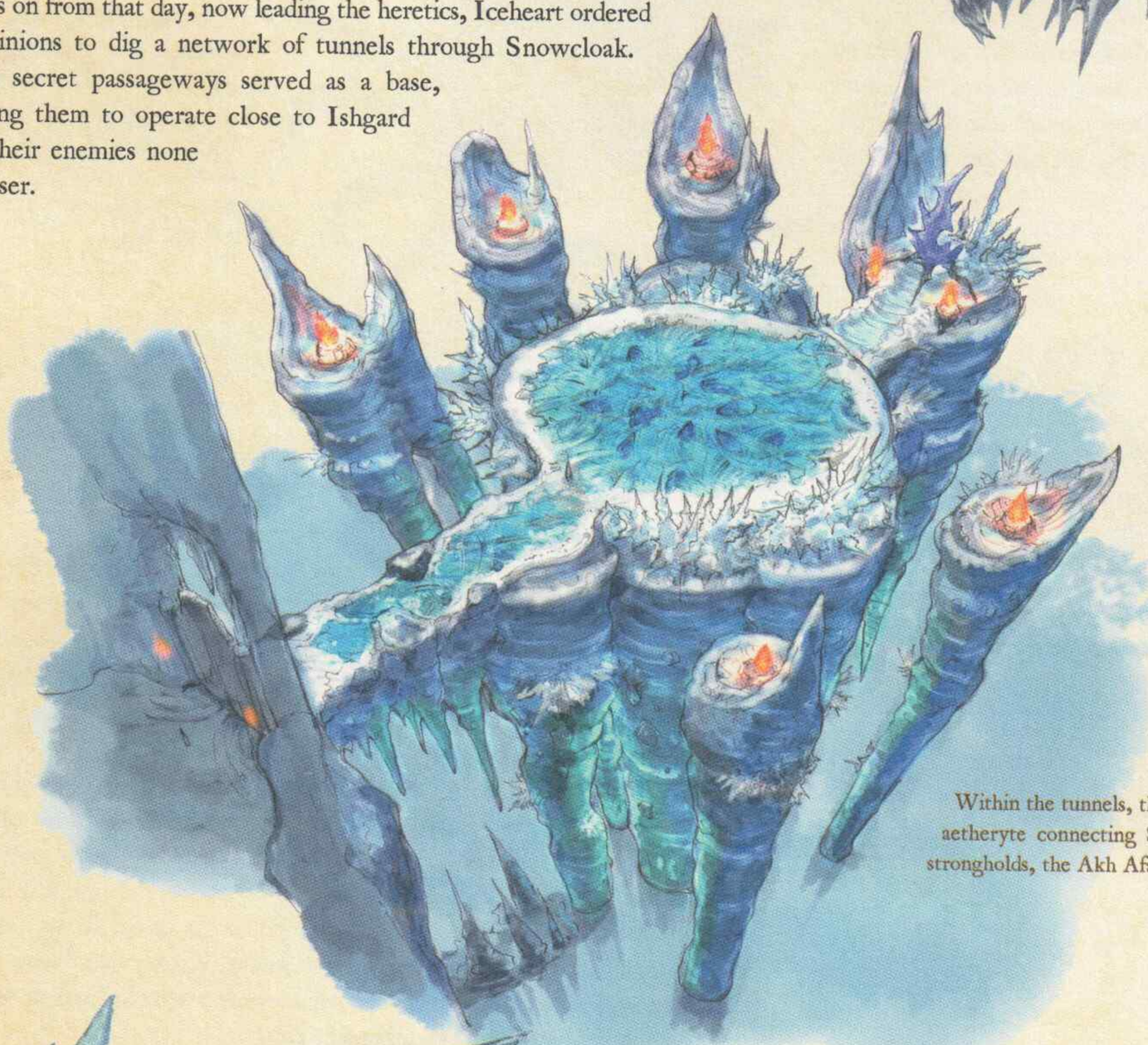
A dizzying ravine once clove the region of Coerthas, separating the central and western highlands, and straddling this divide was a bridge known as Gargoyle Crossing. When the Calamity wrought a great freeze upon these lands, however, an avalanche engulfed both ravine and bridge in snow, and raised in their place an impenetrable ice wall: Snowcloak.

Seeking refuge from the bitter cold, the desperate inhabitants of Falcon's Nest decided to make the perilous climb over the wall in order to reach Ishgard. But as the last of the group began their ascent, a section of the structure broke loose, entombing them beneath tonzes of ice. By some miracle, one little girl survived the tragedy, yet bereft of her kin and forced to turn back alone, it may be said that hers was the crueler fate. Her name was Ysayle Dangoulain, and she would one day become known as Iceheart.

Years on from that day, now leading the heretics, Iceheart ordered her minions to dig a network of tunnels through Snowcloak. These secret passageways served as a base, allowing them to operate close to Ishgard with their enemies none the wiser.

Wandil

Brought to life by the primal Shiva, this golem guardian's hulking body is composed of icicles. Holding sway over the element of ice, it can unleash scouring drifts of snow to afflict its foes with frostbite.



Within the tunnels, the heretics had built a makeshift aetheryte connecting Snowcloak to another of their strongholds, the Akh Afah Amphitheatre.

Fenrir

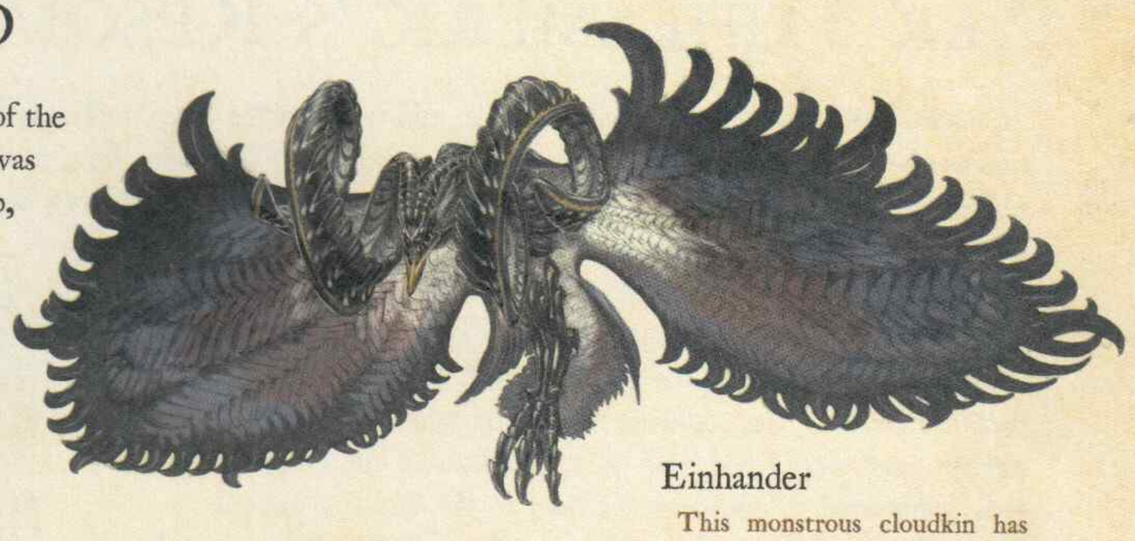
A massive hoarhound beholden to Lady Iceheart. With its shimmering hide reminiscent of pale moonlight and a demeanor just as cold, this imposing beast was named after the legendary spirit-hound Fenrir. It fell upon the adventurers who had stormed Snowcloak, but was slain in the attempt to protect its mistress.

THE KEEPER OF THE LAKE

For Eternity Entwined

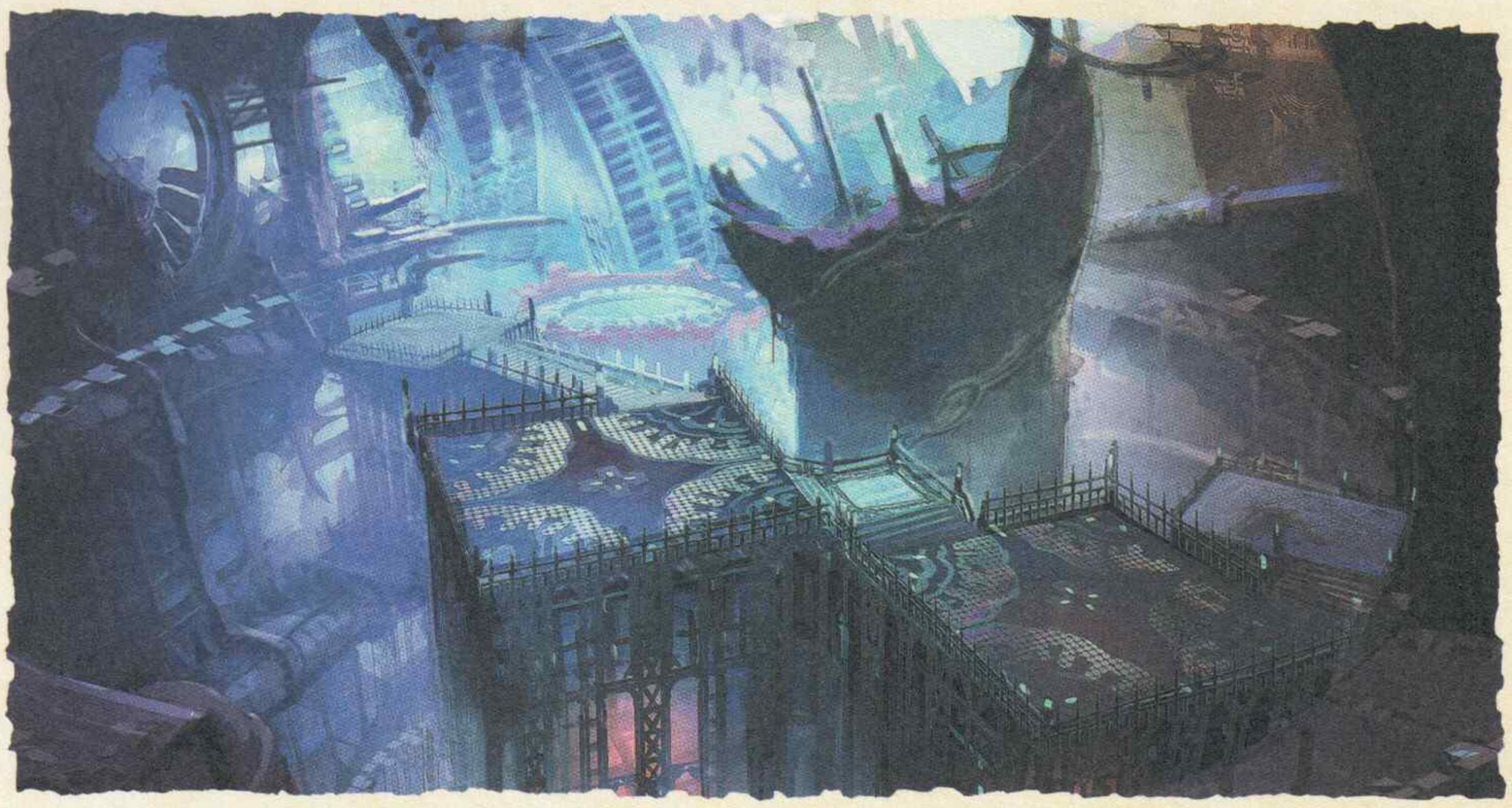
Fifteen years ago, in the skies above Silvertear Falls, the invading forces of the XIVth Legion were set upon by a host of dragons. Leading the charge was Midgardsormr, legendary king of kings, who engaged the Garlean flagship, the *Agrius*, in battle. In the end, both Midgardsormr and his foe fell to the earth, and their tangled remnants stand as a memorial to that day—a ruined airship, and the charred corpse of the wyrm lord who brought it low, forever devoid of life...or so it seemed.

Fearing that Midgardsormr was on the cusp of resurrection, the Ishgardians entreated the aid of the Scions of the Seventh Dawn, who sent the Warrior of Light to investigate the creature's remains at the Keeper of the Lake. At the structure's apex, the hero encountered the specter of the fallen wyrm lord, their meeting triggering a chain of events that would shine the light of truth upon the thousand-year conflict known as the Dragonsong War.



Einhander

This monstrous cloudkin has made its nest inside the Keeper of the Lake. Possessed of superior intelligence, it has reportedly learned to coordinate its hindlimbs to deftly wield imperial weaponry as hunting implements.



Cut off from the Garlean motherland, the remnants of the XIVth Imperial Legion ventured into the wreck of the *Agrius* in search of salvage. But the troops would find more than they bargained for, for a band of adventurers had come to investigate the Keeper of the Lake, leading to an unexpected skirmish.

Midgardsormr

Those who bore witness to the Battle of Silvertear Skies describe the Father of Dragons soaring into battle with a majesty belying his tremendous size. Coiling himself around the *Agrius* in a deathly embrace, he laid ruin to his metallic foe, but was grievously wounded in the ensuing ceruleum explosion and has not since stirred.

THE DUSK VIGIL

Ser Yuhelmeric's Resolve

Counterpart to the Dawn Vigil in the east, this watchtower served as Ishgard's shield against the Dravanian Horde in the west. Garrisoned by the brave knights of House Durendaire, for long years the Dusk Vigil stood firm against the enemy, but it was brought to its knees by the Calamity, which wrought extensive damage to the structure before ushering in a bitter freeze, encasing it in ice.

According to a knight's account as writ in a recovered journal, those engineers who surveyed the watchtower's crumbling walls pled with their commander, Ser Yuhelmeric, asking him to order a withdrawal, but the man would not hear of it. Heedless of the extreme cold, he was determined to discharge his duty to the last and refused to abandon the Vigil, holding his ground even when the garrison's supplies dwindled with no prospect of aid from the Holy See. Many men died—first of the cold, then of starvation, then in a bloody, failed mutiny. Of what followed, little is known, but the Dusk Vigil has since come to be inhabited by all manner of fell beasts, and gods only know what else.

Ser Yuhelmeric

A knight of House Durendaire, Ser Yuhelmeric commanded the garrison at the Dusk Vigil. Uninterred upon his death, he rose again as a revenant to haunt the watchtower he once defended. He left behind in Ishgard a loving wife, who to this day awaits his return.

Opinicus

After the Dusk Vigil fell into disuse, this imposing griffin claimed it for its domain. The creature has adapted remarkably well to the cold that descended upon Coerthas, lying in wait for prey that enters the watchtower in search of shelter.

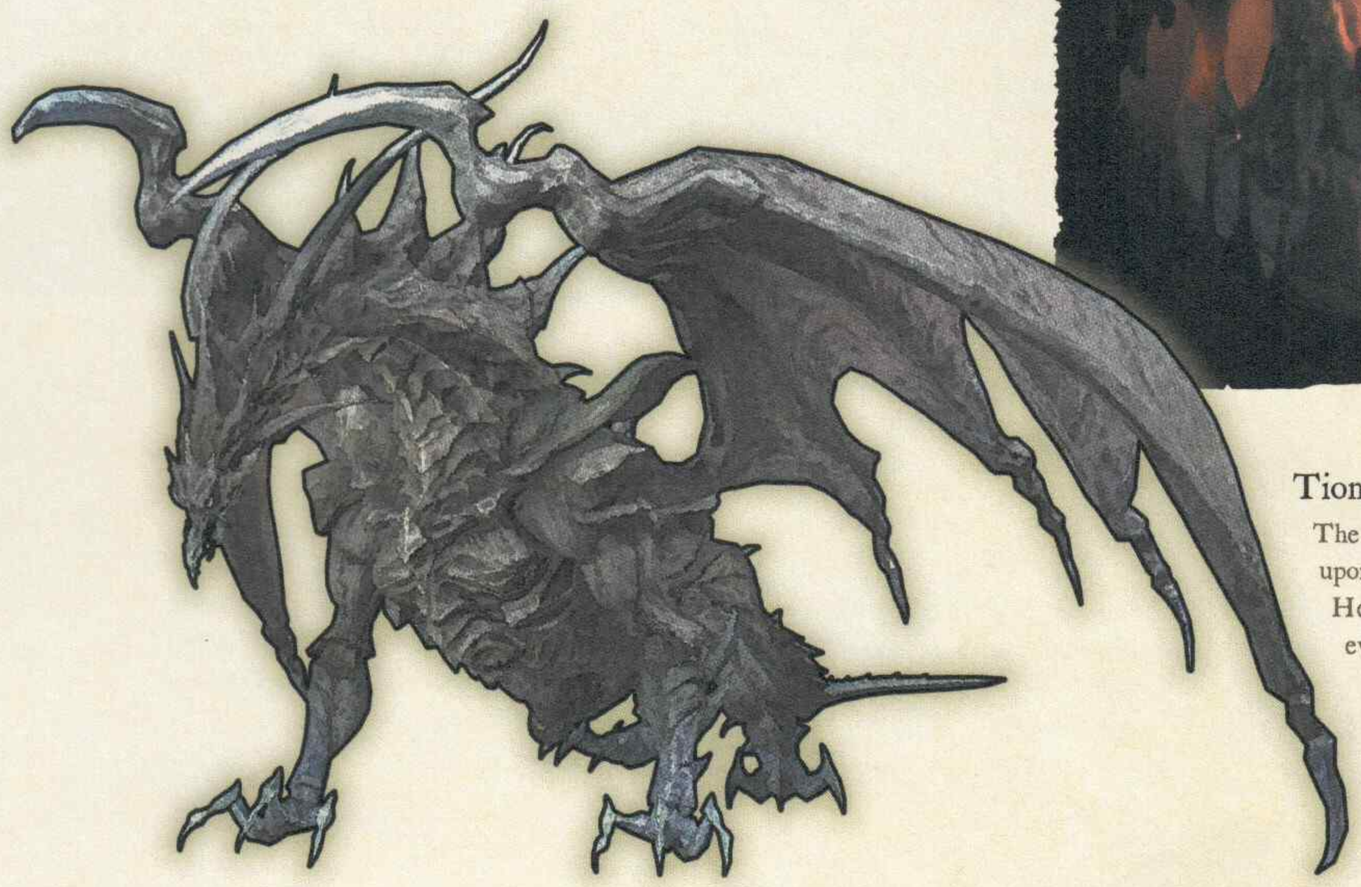
A sculpture of Halone, the Fury, is consecrated at Saint Guenriol's Chapel deep inside the Dusk Vigil, within whose helm is set a priceless sapphire known as an ice rondel. Desiring to retrieve this treasure, a memento of his son Yuhelmeric, Father Wealdtheow drew upon his personal funds to recruit an adventurer to brave the dangers within the watchtower.

SOHM AL

The Promised Rest

The shadow of this towering giant ever falls over the Dravanian forelands. A colossal lode of crystal concealed beneath its rocky skin, the upper bulk of Sohm Al has torn free to become a majestic floating island. Though physically separate, a stream of aether chains the peak in place, and thus, along with its grounded base, is the landform in its entirety considered the highest mountain in all of Eorzea.

Since ancient times, the dragons have revered Sohm Al as a holy site and resting place. Indeed, the name itself means "promised rest," for when a dragon senses that its end is near, it will seek out the mountain's slopes, there to quietly await the approach of death. As such, mortal intrusion is unwelcome at best, and, as was the case with the Warrior of Light's ascent during the Dragonsong War, at worst draws the hostile attentions of Nidhogg's Horde.

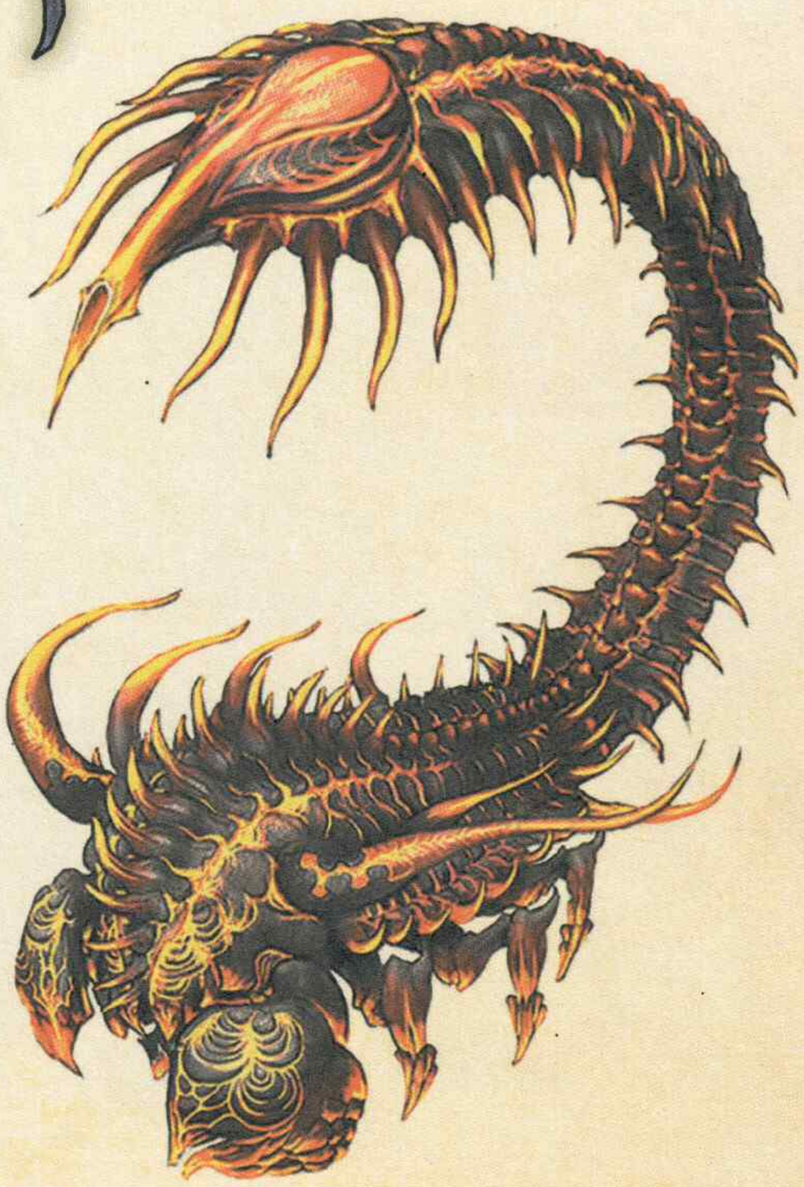


Tioman

The consort of the dread wyrm Nidhogg, Tioman guarded against intruders upon the sacred mountain from her perch atop the eternal vigil, Hess Afah. Her death at the hands of the Warrior of Light is thought to have given even the mighty Nidhogg pause in his plans for vengeance.

Protecting the Holy Land

The fall of Nidhogg brought an end not only to the Dragonsong War, but also to the hierarchy of power that reigned upon Sohm Al. Bereft of its dreaded leader, the Horde scattered to the four winds, leaving the dragons' sacred grounds untended and unguarded. All manner of beastly intruders soon arrived, irresistibly drawn by the energies of bountiful crystal lodes. With none to quash this infestation, Sohm Al's paths became ever more wild and dangerous. And even as the mountain was being overrun, Vidofnir, white dragon of Hraesvelgr's brood, was alerted to the stirrings of its volcanic core. She vowed to hunt down the pests without, but as her bulk was too great to enter the narrow passages within, this investigation she entrusted to the party of the Warrior of Light. That such a request might be made was proof that the rift betwixt man and dragon had already begun to mend.



Lava Scorpion

A creature of living lava, this hulking nightmare lurked in the pools of magma hidden within the heart of Sohm Al. When the dragons were no longer present to keep the scorpion in check, the ancient menace resurfaced and began agitating the mountain's volcanic core with its wild thrashing.

THE AERY

Nidhogg's Lair

In a bygone age, when man and dragon yet abided in harmony, upon this site there stood a castle where the honored kings of men dwelled. This ended, however, when the great wyrm Nidhogg laid it to waste in retribution for his brood-sister Ratatoskr's murder. Thereafter, upon the castle's ruins the wyrm made his lair, and there he would return every few decades to slumber and regain strength for his unending war on mankind.

That he might rest undisturbed, Nidhogg shrouds the Aery in vicious storms—an intimidating show of the power wielded by one of the First Brood. Further protecting his domain are fierce and loyal minions, who stand guard over areas whose names are rooted in a burning hatred for mankind, such as Ten Oohr and Errn Scorh, which may be translated as "depravity's heart" and "man's sin" respectively.

Gyascutus

Gyascutus served Nidhogg as a seneschal, using his arcane mastery to preside over other dragons in the maintenance of the Aery. Adapted for ambulation and bereft of flight, he had not set foot outside the Aery for centuries, and thus was unknown to Ishgardian authorities, appearing not in the Vault's extensive list of draconian menaces.

Nidhogg

One of the seven great wyrms and leader of the Dravanian Horde, Nidhogg and his minions tormented the Holy See for a thousand years in the bloody conflict known as the Dragonsong War. Despite losing his eyes, the source of a dragon's might, he still possessed ample strength to easily destroy Ishgard. That he refrained from the act was solely because he craved not the enemy's destruction, but their eternal punishment. In a twist of irony, however, he would be undone by his own eye, borne by the Azure Dragoon Estinien, who stormed the Aery with the Warrior of Light at his side. At the end of a ferocious struggle, the dread wyrm was laid low, vanishing from sight into the depths of the Churning Mists.

THE VAULT

The Sacred Heart of the Faith

The seat of Ishgard's theocratic government, the Vault brings the administration of the church and the running of the state under one roof and one leader, the archbishop. Rising from the heart of the Pillars, the city's upper level, it has long stood as the shining symbol of the nation.

Ordinarily closed to the public, an exception is made during religious observances such as the Starlight Celebration, when citizens are granted entry to Saint Thordan's Basilica, the church on the ground floor dedicated to the founding father. By special order, its doors were also opened to those who had been displaced by the fires that ravaged the Brume district.

In contrast, but a privileged few outside the clergy have set foot on the upper levels. Accessible via lifts, the area is considered a holy sanctum, housing such facilities as church offices and prayer gardens, as well as the chambers of the archbishop himself. Situated above all of this, crowning the Vault—and indeed Ishgard—is the Hall of the Spear. Built in the image of the ice palace the Fury is said to have carved with Her spear, the temple sees use in official ceremonies such as the coronation of an archbishop.

Ser Grinnaux the Bull

Transformed and empowered, Ser Grinnaux de Dzemael of the Heavens' Ward rose to challenge the Warrior of Light and his comrades, holding them at bay while the archbishop made his escape.

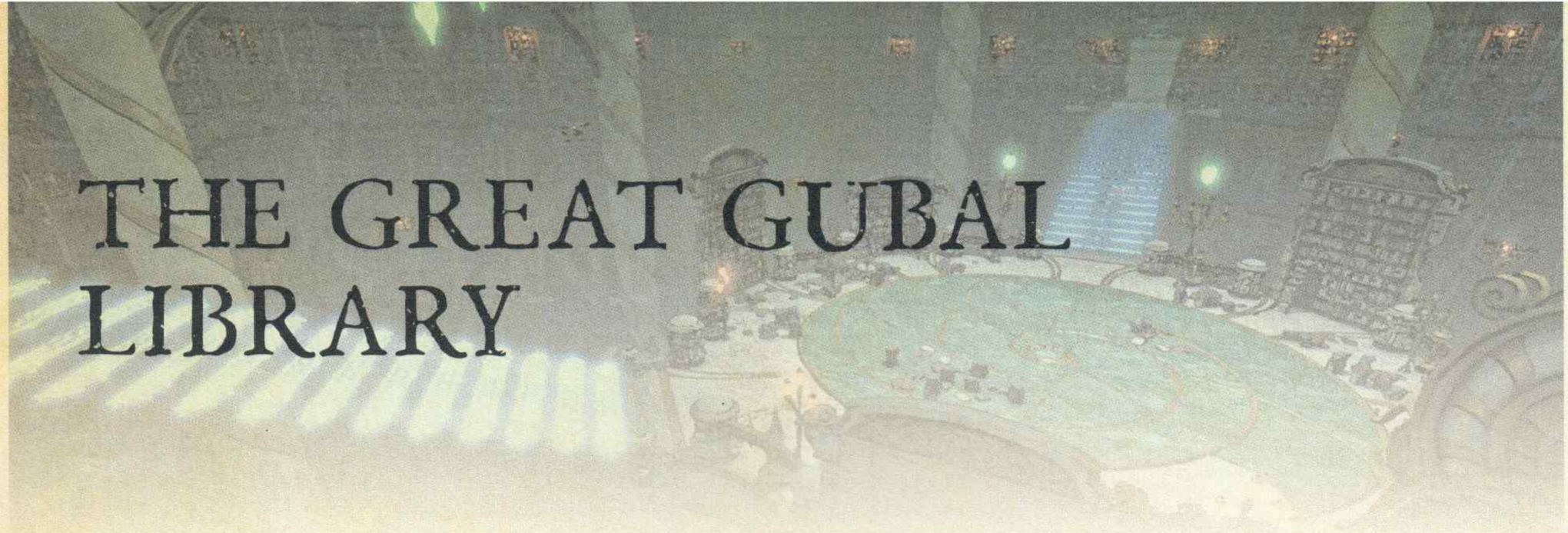
Ser Adelphel Brightblade

A brother of the Heavens' Ward, Ser Adelphel de Chevraudan received of the primal King Thordan's power and attained a stature to rival giants. Despite his additional bulk, the elegant swordsmanship for which he is famed was not diminished in the least.

Ser Charibert the Stern

Named to the Heavens' Ward by virtue of his gift for pyromancy, Ser Charibert de Leusignac's already formidable powers further burgeoned with his transformation. His abundance of arcane strength allowed him to simultaneously command the Vault's automaton guardians against the Warrior of Light, but he nonetheless found himself overmatched and was forced to withdraw.

THE GREAT GUBAL LIBRARY



The Abandoned Storehouse of Wisdom

Built by the learned men and women of Sharlayan, the Great Gubal Library is the grandest repository of knowledge in all of Eorzea. Lining its towering shelves are tomes beyond count, gathered from the farthest reaches of the realm. Like the city-state, however, the library was abandoned by its caretakers in the exodus fifteen years ago and its entrance sealed by magicks.

Comprised of myriad sections, upon entering the library one soon encounters the School of Phantasmagoria. Open to the general citizenry, the school features a series of rounded platforms with open-plan shelves, connected via magical stairs. Proceeding deeper, one next comes upon the research rooms, access to which is restricted to scholars from approved institutions such as the Studium in the Sharlayan motherland. Venturing deeper still, inquiring minds will find themselves within the School of Fantastics, home to forbidden tomes reserved only for the eyes of those who bear the title of Archon. Such a section, it should come as no surprise, is kept under tight guard.

The Everliving Bibliotaph

This hulking soulkin mammet was created to guard the library's forbidden section. Embodying an arcane tome with voidsent sealed within its pages, it imitates a living will to forge a pact with the creatures, which are unleashed upon trespassers. By way of a safety measure, should the Bibliotaph's aetherial core become spent and it cease to function, the voidsent are automatically released from the pact and returned to their realm.

A Room on the Upper Floor

In a quiet corner of the Great Gubal Library, on its lonely uppermost floor, there is a section which houses the rarest of volumes—the aptly named Rare Tomes Room. It is said that some of the tomes stored therein were of such great worth, one could only enter the room with the express approval of the head librarian and in the presence of senior staff and guards.

Lest ambitious treasure hunters wonder, any truly rare volumes have already been removed, borne back to the Sharlayan motherland during the exodus. All that remains today are the replaceable and the magically reproduced.

Strix

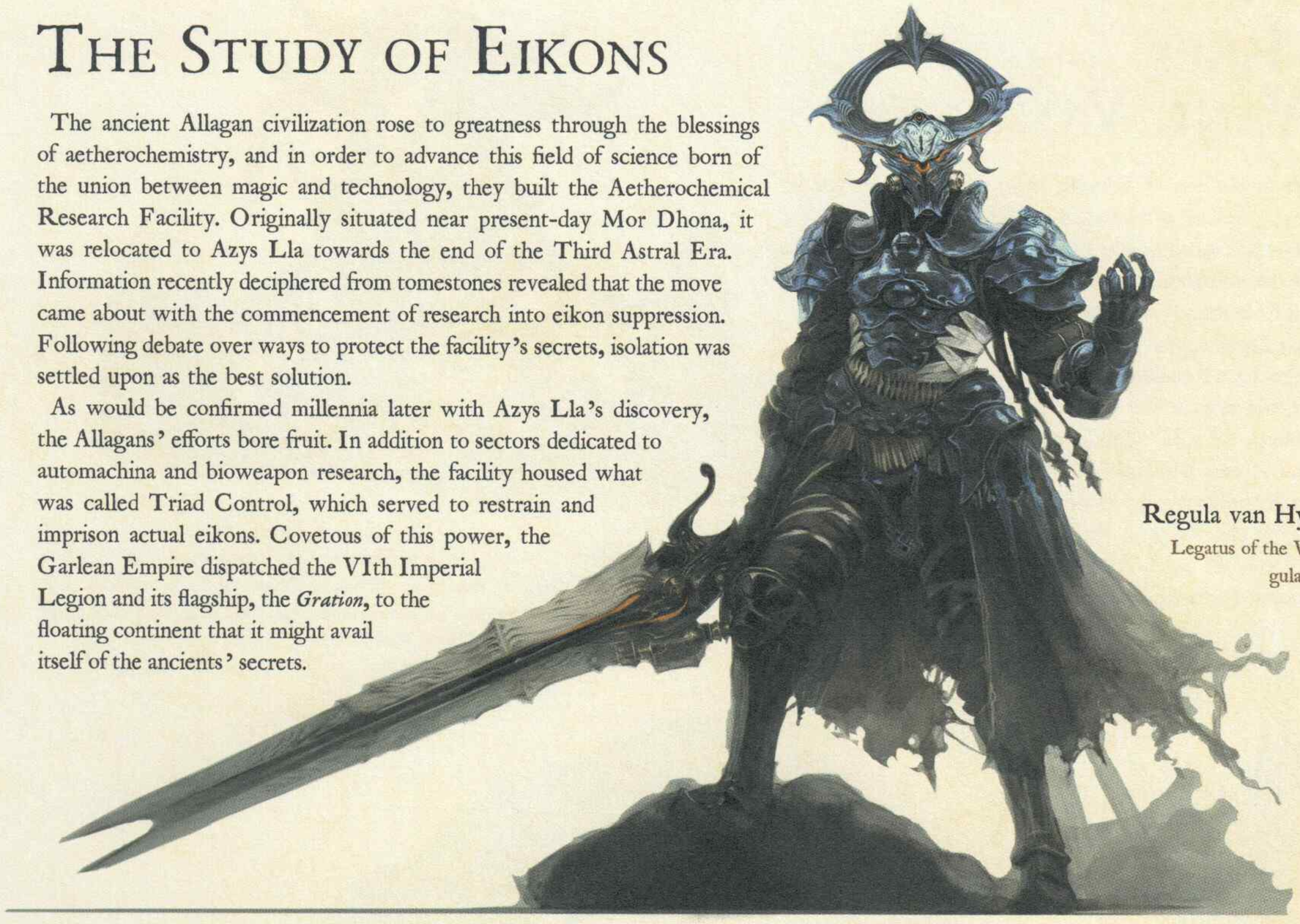
A guardian bound to the Rare Tomes Room on the highest floor of the Great Gubal Library. Similar to skatenes, Strix is an owl which has been enchanted with heightened intelligence. Strix's comparatively vast intellect, however, grants the creature command over spells of formidable potency.

THE AETHEROCHEMICAL RESEARCH FACILITY

The Study of Eikons

The ancient Allagan civilization rose to greatness through the blessings of aetherochemistry, and in order to advance this field of science born of the union between magic and technology, they built the Aetherochemical Research Facility. Originally situated near present-day Mor Dhona, it was relocated to Azys Lla towards the end of the Third Astral Era. Information recently deciphered from tomestones revealed that the move came about with the commencement of research into eikon suppression. Following debate over ways to protect the facility's secrets, isolation was settled upon as the best solution.

As would be confirmed millennia later with Azys Lla's discovery, the Allagans' efforts bore fruit. In addition to sectors dedicated to automachina and bioweapon research, the facility housed what was called Triad Control, which served to restrain and imprison actual eikons. Covetous of this power, the Garlean Empire dispatched the VIth Imperial Legion and its flagship, the *Gration*, to the floating continent that it might avail itself of the ancients' secrets.



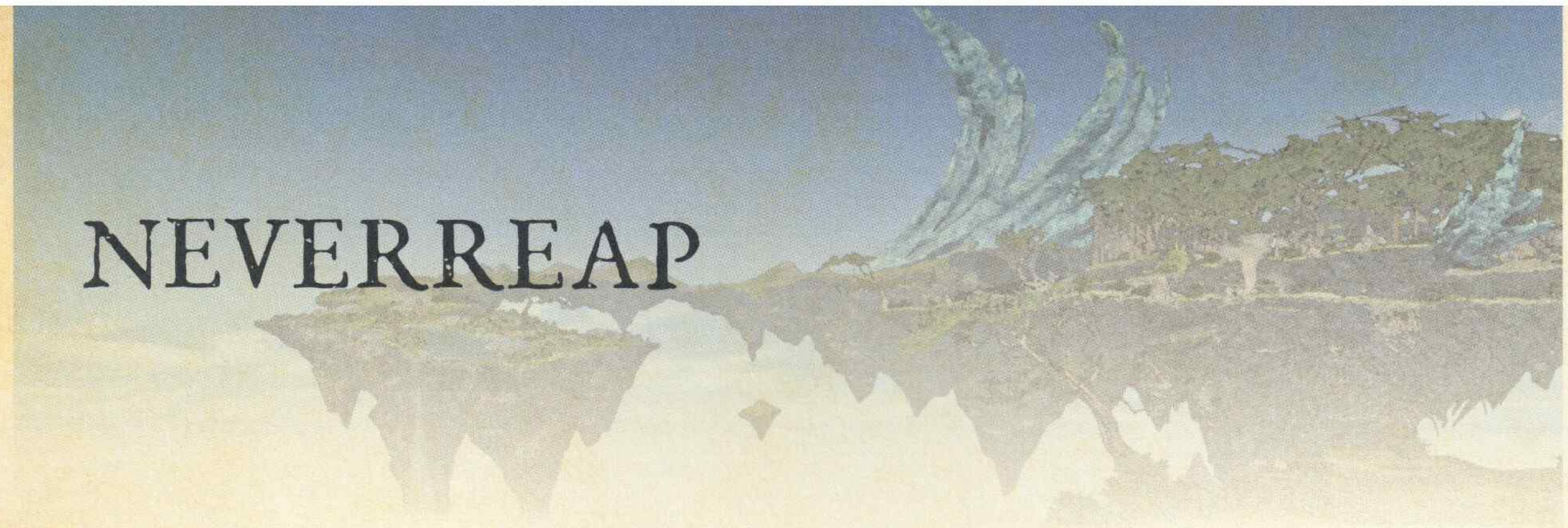
Regula van Hydrus

Legatus of the VIth Imperial Legion, Regula has long been a close friend of Emperor Varis, and his loyalty to his liege is absolute. In return, Varis has absolute trust in Regula, and thus did he charge him with leading the expedition to retrieve the secrets of eikon suppression on Azys Lla.

Even after five thousand years, many parts of the facility were miraculously found to be fully functional. The Sons of Saint Coinach posit that the Allagans likely employed temporal magicks, which they studied in the twilight of the Third Astral Era, to place certain contraptions into stasis.

Ascian Prime

Calling upon the power of the Echo to break down the barriers of their souls, the Ascians Lahabrea and Igeyorhm merged into a single entity. As one, they proved far more formidable than the sum of their individual forms, and were capable of wielding the mightiest magicks with fearsome ease. Thus freed from their mortal vessels, they assumed a ghastly appearance befitting the servants of Darkness.



NEVERREAP

Sacred Isles of the Vanu Vanu

Floating at the fringes of the Sea of Clouds, these isles are hallowed by the Vanu Vanu as the birthplace of Bismarck, whom they believe is the reincarnation of a noble white-hued whale whose soul was honored by the gods. Legend holds that the northernmost isle was the very first landmass the Lord of the Mists raised from the sea unto the sky, in recognition of which a shrine, the Cloud That Laughs, was built upon it.

Since ancient times, it has been forbidden to harvest the bounty of Neverreap—even to set foot upon it save during an annual ritual is a grievous offense. Indeed, the isles' name, a direct translation of the Vanu, alludes to this fact. Students of language may be interested to know that pronouncing the native name requires a sound made by plucking the inside of the beak with one's tongue—a difficult feat for other races. And so, for this and certain other Vanu names, common Eorzean has come to be used.

Erected along the paths of Neverreap are arcane apparatuses known as cloud altars. By making an offering of prayer and dance to Bismarck at these altars, pilgrims are blessed with a gust that bears them ever closer to His shrine, the Cloud That Laughs.

Canu Vanu

A shaman of the powerful and warlike Vundu, Canu Vanu leads a radical faction within his tribe. Believing that Bismarck's blessing places him above Vanu law, he knows no scruple and has made countless transgressions, among them the profaning of ancestral totems, which he cursed and reduced to tools of war.

The Waukkeon

Making its nest on Neverreap, the scales of this giant sanuwa glisten with liquid vibrancy, as if the life-giving rains that fall upon the floating isles were trapped within. From such a treasure one might fashion the finest of masks, the symbol of power among the Vanu Vanu. In a bid to undermine the Zundu chieftain's authority and prevent him from replacing his aging mask, the Vundu would go so far as to trespass upon forbidden ground in order to hunt the creature.

THE FRACTAL CONTINUUM

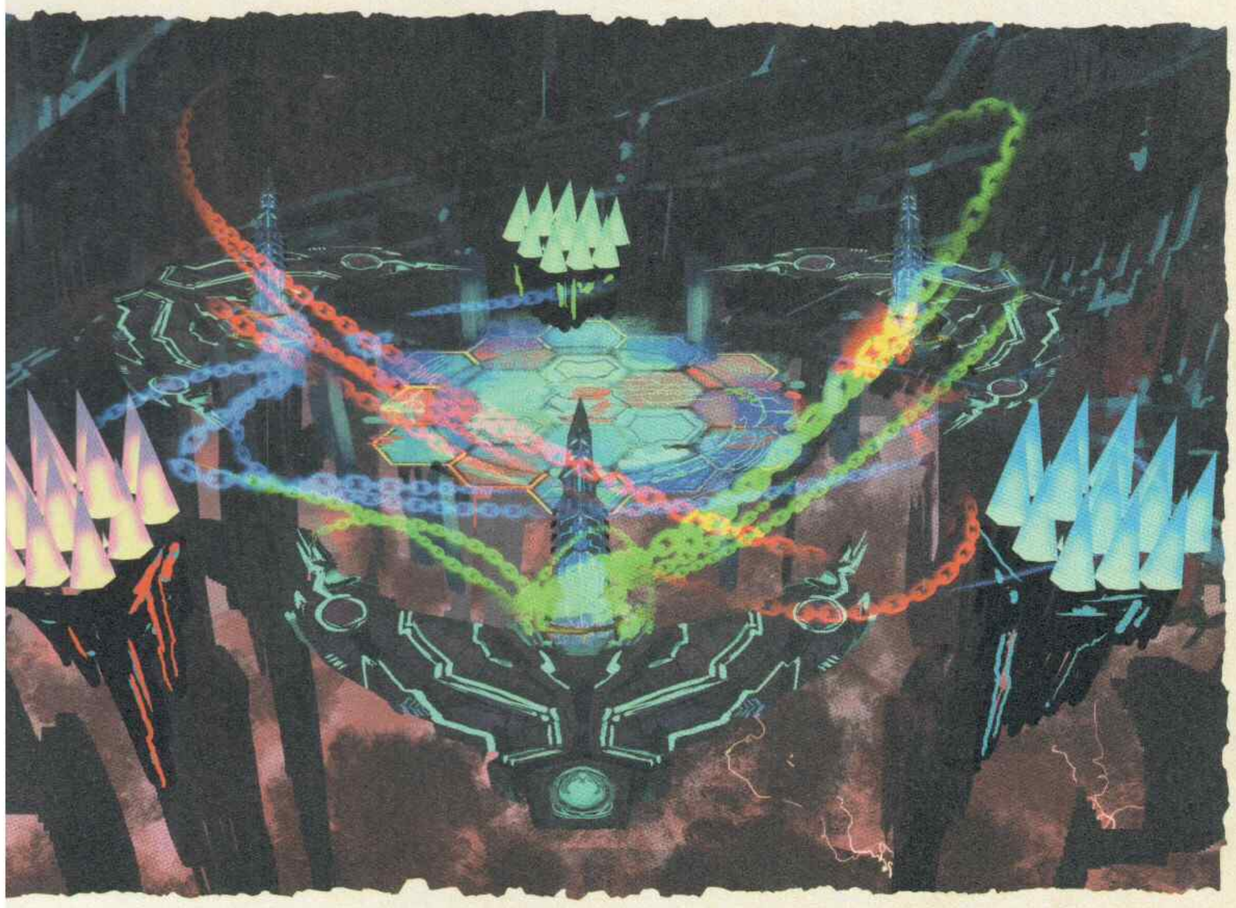
The Glory of Allag

The Fractal Continuum is a mobile museum of ancient Allag converted from a decommissioned warship. Moored at Azys Lla and incorporating satellite isles, it houses over a thousand years' worth of technological marvels born of Allagan ingenuity. Its distinctive design was no accident, deemed ideal for the purpose of impressing the greatness of the Empire upon loyal citizens in all corners of the realm.

Visitors to the museum can learn about notable inventions in various spheres, from modern conveniences that improved lives to military contraptions that ended them. A veritable army of automachina is on display, as is a menagerie of live chimerical specimens—some of which have reportedly escaped containment to roam free and breed.

The Curator

An autonomous machine housed within the Fractal Continuum. Primarily a tool for education, the Curator is equipped with a reality augmentation system that combines projected images and clever contrivances, allowing museum visitors to experience a plethora of technological marvels. So convincing is the effect, some have sworn that it surpasses that which it imitates.



Truth Beyond the Clouds

Among every race, there are those who do not conform to societal norms—eccentrics and outcasts who hold to their own ways. The Ixal are no exception, as can be seen in the Ehcatl Nine, the gathering of artisans and engineers who dreamed of finding Ayatlan, the legendary lost paradise of their kind. In pursuit of this dream, they labored to create an airship that could fly higher than any ever had in Eorzea, drawing upon not only their own techniques, but those of men besides—a marked departure from the majority of their brethren, who wage war with the Gridanians in the name of their goddess, Garuda.

At length, the Ehcatl Nine succeeded in building a prototype vessel that could bear them higher than the clouds. But beyond there awaited a damning truth. On a solo flight, the Ixal Kezul Itzcan discovered the floating continent of Azys Lla, whereupon he ventured into the Fractal Continuum to come face-to-face with a chimerical being named Iksalion. In that instant, he knew: the Ixal were created by the Allagans. Yet this revelation did naught to deter his leader, Sezul Totoloc, who declared that their dream—their burning desire to take to the skies—is their own, and no creation of science. Thus did they resume their efforts, their eyes turned ever forward and upward, towards paradise.

The Ultima Beast

This prototype primal countermeasure was created as part of the Ultima Project. A bioweapon of flesh and blood brought to life via chimerical science, it boasts remarkable vigor and advanced arcane abilities. By merging its traits with those of the Ultima Warrior, an earlier bipedal prototype, the Allagans went on to conceive Proto Ultima.

SAINT MOCIANNE'S ARBORETUM

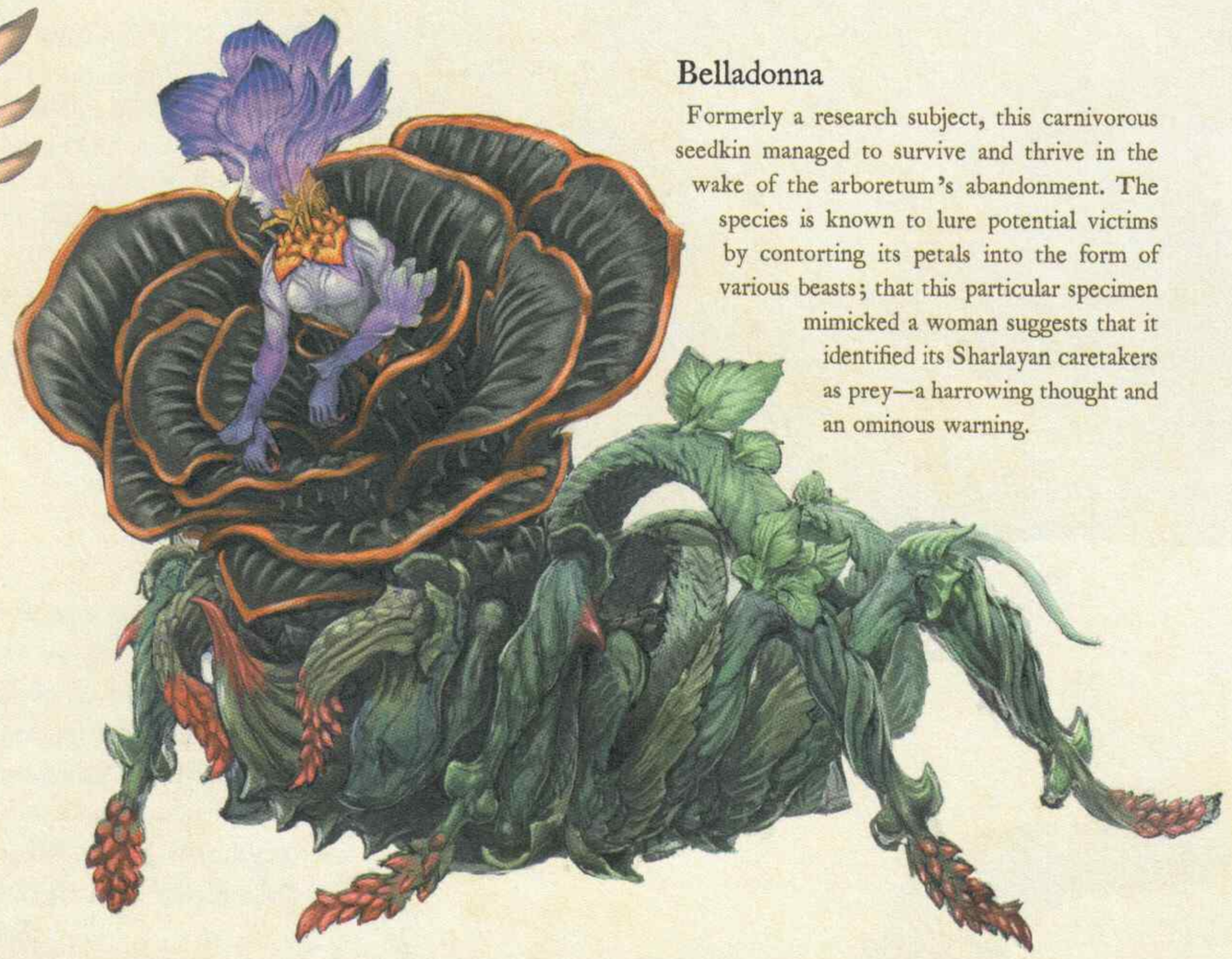
The Forgotten Gardens

The scholars of Sharlayan established this arboretum near their settlement in the Dravanian hinterlands. Building conservatories to simulate diverse climes from the tropical through to the arid, they cultivated plants and seedkin gathered from all the lands of the world. During its heyday, the arboretum bustled with botanists who tended the plant life, its research center documenting discoveries in areas such as trait improvement, agricultural techniques, and plant-based remedies. Sadly, the exodus saw it abandoned, and the teeming life within was left to run wild and unchecked.

The arboretum was home not only to plants and seedkin; symbiotic wildlife such as pollinating bees were also kept, and they too were left to their own devices following the exodus. In time their numbers burgeoned, and a colossal hive came to occupy part of the gardens, giving rise to a bizarre waxen landscape.

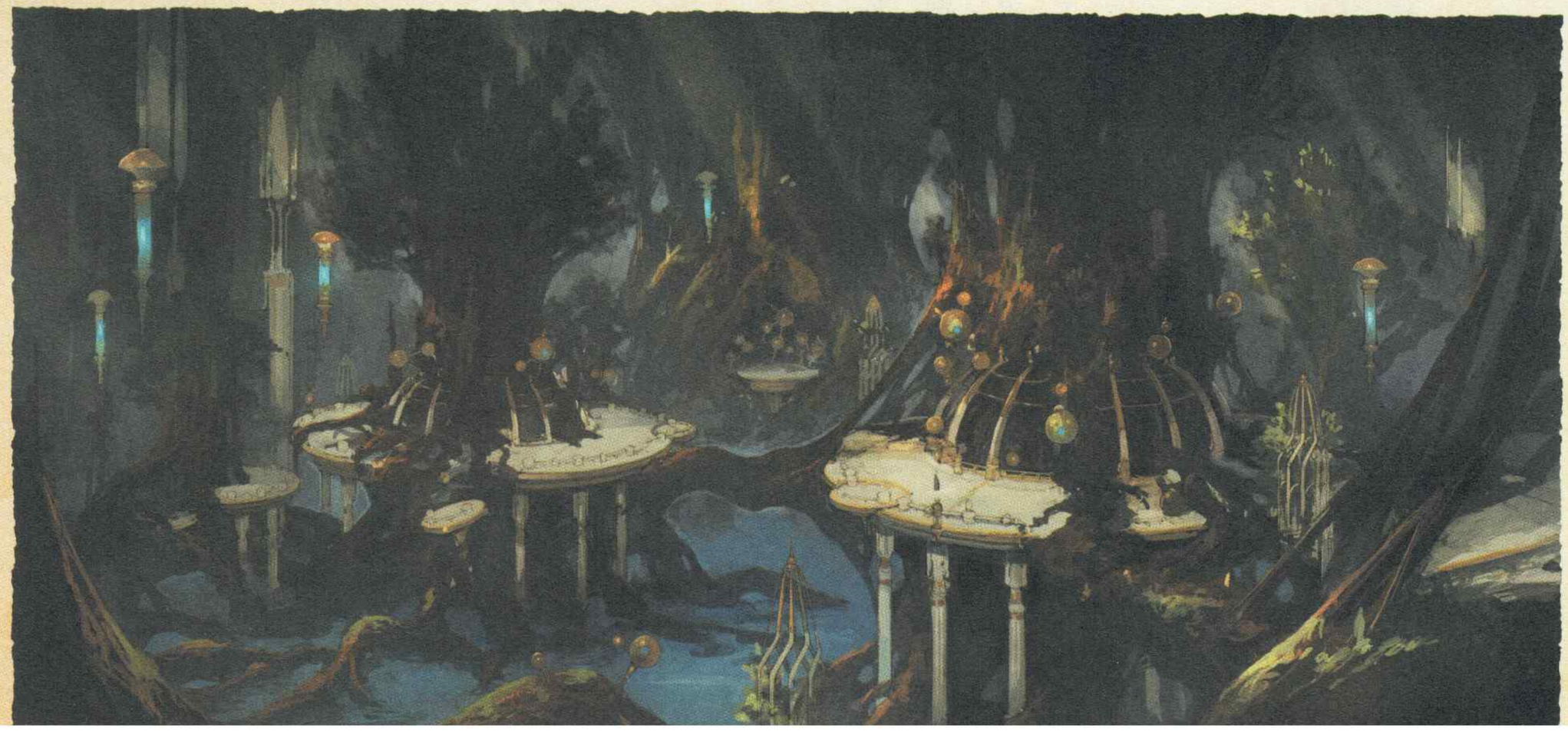
Queen Hawk

The tarantula hawk is a species of aggressive bee native to the New World. The queen commands the colony by secreting her pheromones, which grant her total control over her minions. Moving as one, they swarm and overwhelm any threats to their monarch with nary a care for losses.



Belladonna

Formerly a research subject, this carnivorous seedkin managed to survive and thrive in the wake of the arboretum's abandonment. The species is known to lure potential victims by contorting its petals into the form of various beasts; that this particular specimen mimicked a woman suggests that it identified its Sharlayan caretakers as prey—a harrowing thought and an ominous warning.



THE ANTITOWER

A Porthole to the Aetherial Sea

In the year 1311 of the Sixth Astral Era, scholars from the northern nation of Sharlayan discovered natural caverns that descended deep into the subterrane of the Dravanian hinterlands. Judging the site ideal for observing the aetherial sea—the heart of Hydaelyn Herself—they constructed an observatory, the Antitower, and proceeded to study the fate of the very star. As the tower underwent expansion, so too did the little settlement that serviced it grow. This settlement came to assume the role of a waypoint for successive scholarly expeditions to Eorzea before eventually blossoming into the city-state of Sharlayan.

Generations later, as the exodus drew near, there were calls for the Antitower to be demolished in order to prevent its misuse. However, its immeasurable academic value ultimately prevailed, and instead it was locked behind a slew of protective seals, whose care was left to the lone individual who chose to remain behind, the Archon Matoya.

Zuro Roggo

Boasting extraordinary size and girth, this poroggo familiar fled its Sharlayan creators during the exodus and sought to establish a kingdom of its own kind inside the Antitower. With a voice lauded as divine by its peers, it croons out songs that brim with magical power.

Calcabrina

This doll-like construct was created to protect the sanctity of the Antitower. Steeped in the energies of generations of mages, the powerful magicks instilled in this guardian have worked eerie transmutations upon its form, which it conceals by dividing itself into lesser dolls, Calca and Brina.

In the depths near the aetherial sea, the laws of nature are in disarray and the hold of gravity weakened. To facilitate movement in such an environment, the Sharlayans employed arcane platforms and teleportation devices.

SOHR KHAI

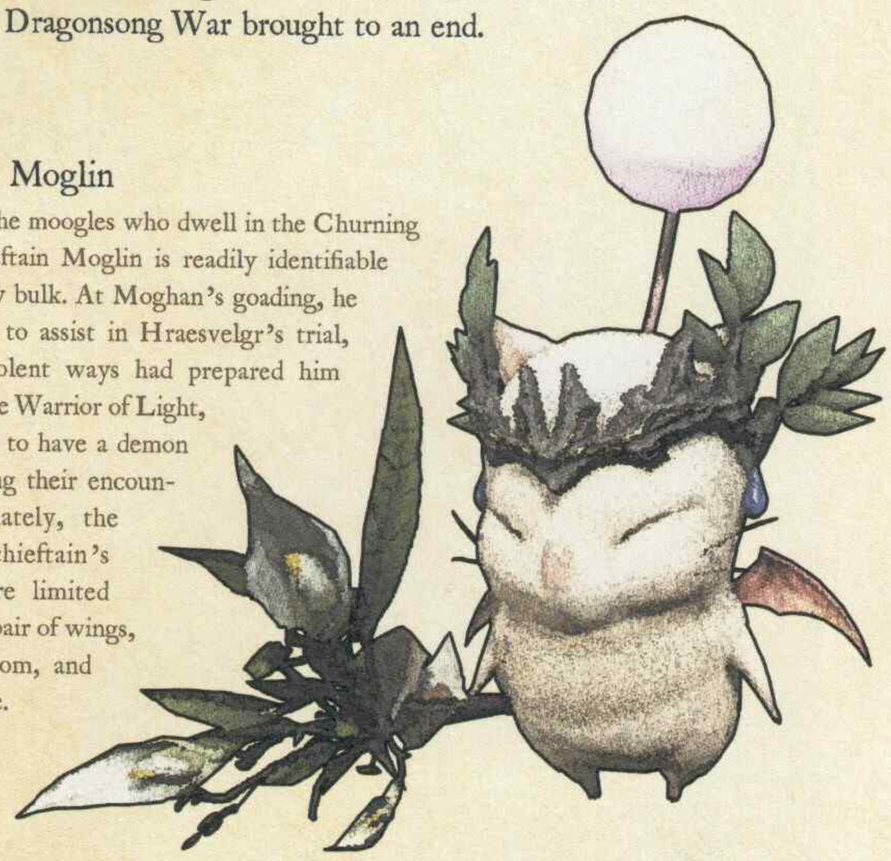
An Empty Roost

In the farthest reaches of the Churning Mists, a majestic palace rests atop the clouds. A thousand years ago, this skyborne splendor was home to the great wyrm Ratatoskr, who wove beauteous songs that moved man and dragon alike, until the treachery of mortals forever silenced her voice. Heartbroken, many of Ratatoskr's progeny ended their own lives, while others scattered to the four winds. What few dragons still remained in Dravania named the palace "Sohr Khai," a grieving apology for their failure to avert her fate, and seldom ventured near.

It is in this place that Hraesvelgr chose to test the Warrior of Light and his comrades. Through their visceral encounter, the wyrm would come to know not only their strength, but also their determination to see the Dragonsong War brought to an end.

Chieftain Moglin

Leader of the moogles who dwell in the Churning Mists, Chieftain Moglin is readily identifiable by his kingly bulk. At Moghan's goading, he volunteered to assist in Hraesvelgr's trial, but his indolent ways had prepared him poorly for the Warrior of Light, who seemed to have a demon in him during their encounter. Fortunately, the esteemed chieftain's injuries were limited to a kinked pair of wings, an aching pom, and bruised pride.



Reliefs depicting Ratatoskr can be seen throughout Sohr Khai. The work of men's hands, they are among the few objects that remain to stand testament to a forgotten era of harmony.

Hraesvelgr

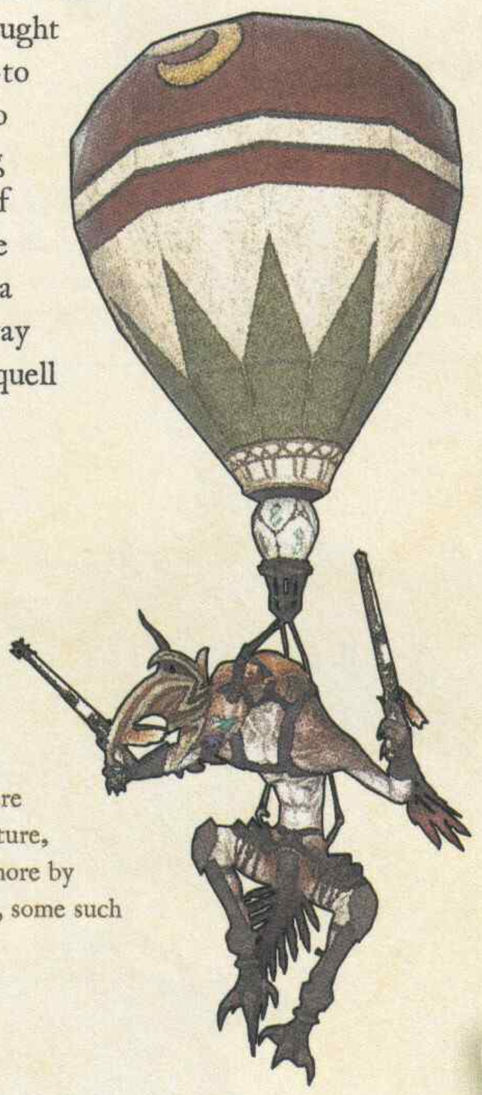
One of the seven great wyrms of the First Brood, Hraesvelgr yielded an eye to Nidhogg in an act that empowered his brood-brother's revenge, but thereafter he refused to involve himself in the Dragonsong War. It was not until a millennium later, when Ysayle and the Warrior of Light appeared before him, that he was given cause to reconsider his stance. In the end, he resolved to confront the wrathful shade of his brother, and in testing Eorzea's champions, it is thought that he sought a semblance of closure.

XELPHATOL

The Home of the Ixal

Forced to flee the Black Shroud for fear of the elementals and their boundless wrath, the Ixal settled the windswept mountains of Xelphatol more than five hundred and fifty years ago. In stark contrast to their lush and bounteous former home, these lands situated on the eastern reaches of Abalathia's Spine were harsh and unforgiving. While water was abundant, the unyielding rock that dominated the landscape suffered no crops to take root and sustained precious little game, and it was all the Ixal could do to eke out an existence. Yet by the same token, they were spared the attentions of outside rivals, and slowly but surely they expanded their dominion over the entire region, making their homes within caves and canyons and fortifying their faith in the Lady of the Vortex.

Yet the Ixal never forgot that which was once denied to them, and they sought divine intervention once more—to summon Garuda and beseech her to strike down their enemies. Sensing the wind's rising, the Scions of the Seventh Dawn sent forth the Warrior of Light, who traversed a Coerthan mountain pass on his way into the heart of enemy territory to quell the gathering storm.



Nuzal Hueloc

After settling in Xelphatol, the Ixal were rendered flightless by a cruel trick of nature, but they eventually soared the skies once more by means of balloons. Borne by smaller crafts, some such as Nuzal Hueloc are able to fly solo.

Dotoli Ciloc

Wielding a fan infused with Garuda's blessing, this Ixali thaumaturge unleashes violent winds that send foes scattering. Outside of battle, she has been known to explore methods of harnessing the fan's power to increase the cruising speed of her tribe's war balloons.

Tozol Huatotl

Tozol is of the Huatotl blood-line—one of the four great Ixali families said to be descended from the "Skysent." Numbered among the few ritualists capable of performing the rites of primal summoning, Tozol attempted to call forth the capricious Garuda in the stronghold of Xelphatol.

BAELSAR'S WALL

Steel Separating the Forest

Baelsar's Wall is an imposing structure which divides the Black Shroud and Gyr Abania. Built at the orders of the legatus Gaius van Baelsar as a means to contain lands corrupted by primal influence, the wall's center is dominated by the defensive stronghold of Castrum Oriens. The facilities within have been augmented numerous times, with engineers outfitting magitek workshops with production line capabilities, and accelerating manufacture of the "slasher" model warmachina.

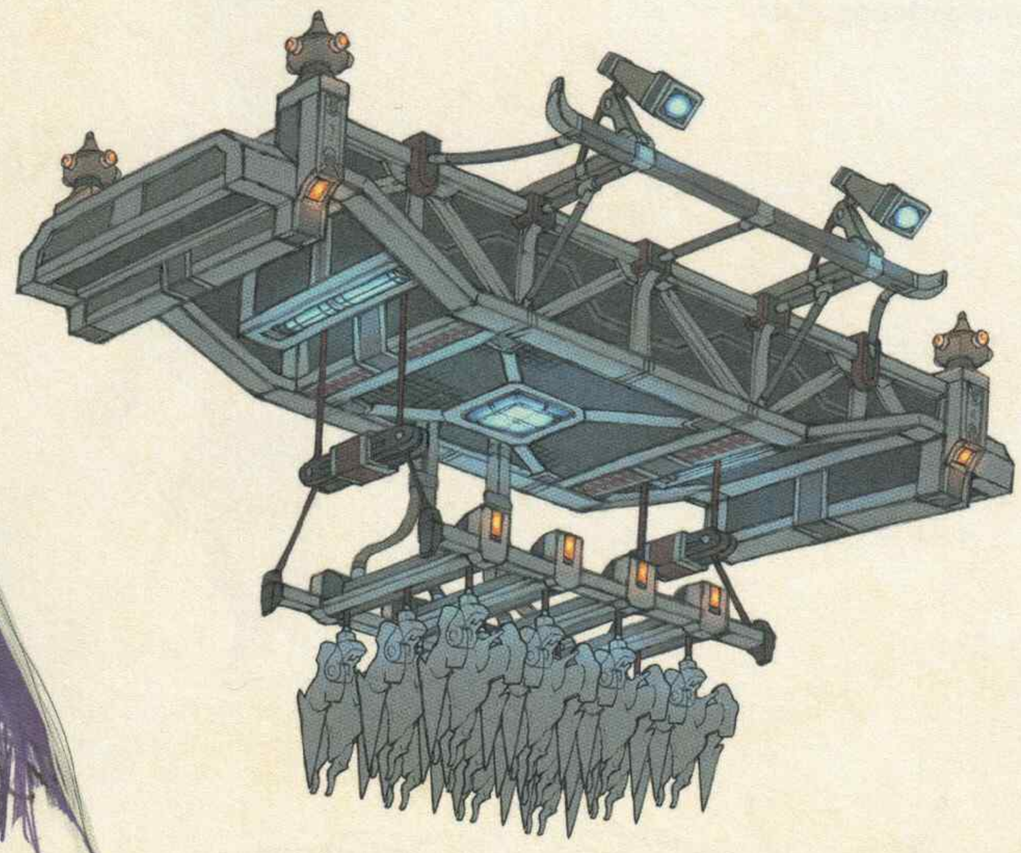
Disguised in Grand Company uniforms, it was against this fortification that the Griffin and his Masks would launch an assault, and force a chain of events leading to Ala Mhigo's liberation. When cornered atop the wall by Eorzea's champion and the Scions, the Griffin did the unthinkable, draining Nidhogg's eyes and sacrificing his own life in the final step of a summoning ritual. His actions culminated in the manifestation of the primal Shinryu, and forever skewed the course of the ensuing war to free Ala Mhigo.

Armored Weapon

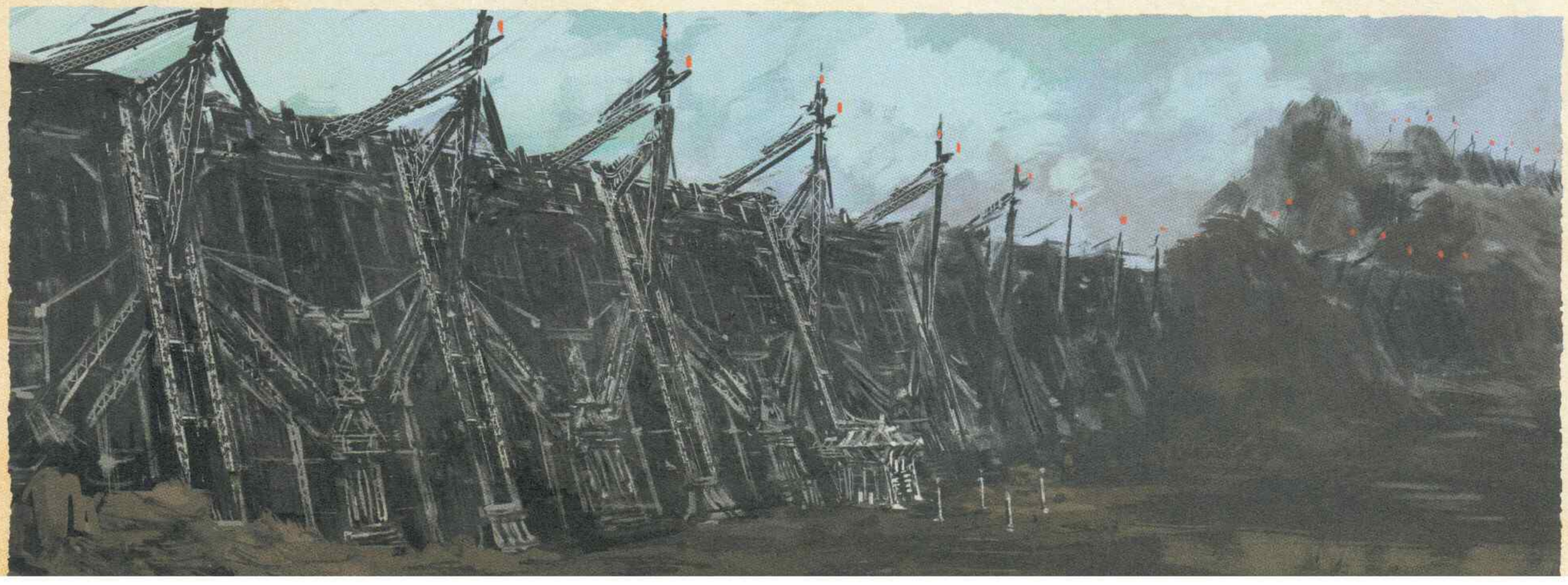
Constructed within the Wall's manufacturing facilities, the armored weapon was designed around vanguard technology, allowing the machine to be either piloted or autonomous in combat. As its autonomous functions were limited to simple orders such as "destroy all targets," however, the unpiloted weapon was ill-suited to operations requiring any degree of subtlety.

The Griffin

This firebrand leader who seized the reins of the Ala Mhigan Resistance was later revealed to be Ilberd Feare, former captain of the Crystal Braves. Through his dealings with the Ascians, the Griffin acquired the eyes of Nidhogg, and drew upon their immeasurable energies to perform a primal summoning. He leapt to his death to complete the ritual, dragging down with him into oblivion the answers to a great many questions.



As well as presenting an imposing physical barrier, Baelsar's Wall was built as a magitek factory and production line. Industrial cranes and other mechanical conveyances were also installed to facilitate the transport of large numbers of warmachina.



THE SIRENSONG SEA

A Prison in the Mist

East of the Drown and southwest of Thavnair, there lies an expanse of water which legend holds is the haunt of sirens, the scourge of sailors. While indeed named for the seductive fiends, some explorers have suggested that the sea's reputation is but a fishwives' tale intended to warn people away from its actual danger—a nigh ever-present blanket of thick fog. However, this theory does not account for the unsettling reports of vessels lurching violently despite calm conditions. Whatever the truth may be, one thing was never in dispute: countless ships have vanished within these waters.

Approximately a century ago, out of concern for the impact upon trade, the magistrate of Radz-at-Han ordered the construction of a lighthouse on the Sirensong Sea. A suitable isle was found, and a host of convicts was brought over to build not only the lighthouse, but also a prison wherein they would be held afterwards. Yet though the work was completed without incident, every single ship sent to deliver supplies and relieve the guard never reached its destination. Under these circumstances, operations could not be sustained, and within a matter of years the isle was abandoned.

An artist's rendering of the lighthouse and surrounding waters. Dubbed "Glowering Krautz," its light source is stated to be a perpetual flame kindled by Near Eastern alchemy, but whether it continues to burn in the absence of caretakers is unknown.

Lorelei

En route to the Far East, the *Misery* was shaken by a mysterious force and set adrift upon a current. The vessel was eventually deposited on the abandoned prison isle, the lighthouse rising ominously in the distance. Within the tower, members of the voyage encountered and vanquished a peculiar fiend believed to have originated the legend of the Sirensong Sea. While information is limited, the creature is conjectured to be a type of undead born of the soul of a deceased siren.

The Governor

According to Hannish records, like so many before it, the vessel dispatched to bring home the prisoners and their guards never returned. Waiting for rescue to no avail, the isle's denizens eventually perished only to rise again as undead.

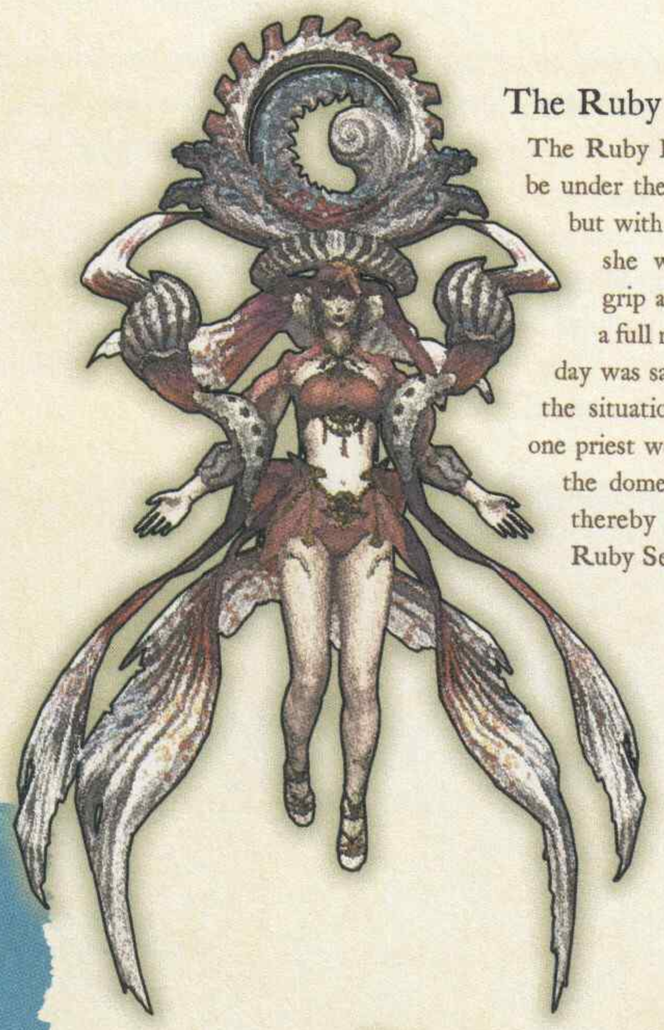
SHISUI OF THE VIOLET TIDES

The Palace Beneath the Sea

Nestled on the sands of the Turquoise Trench, a thousand thousand fathoms below the surface of the Ruby Sea, is Shisui of the Violet Tides. A resplendent palace erected by Raen refugees who fled underwater to escape the constant wars that raged upon the land, its unique beauty is nigh unparalleled.

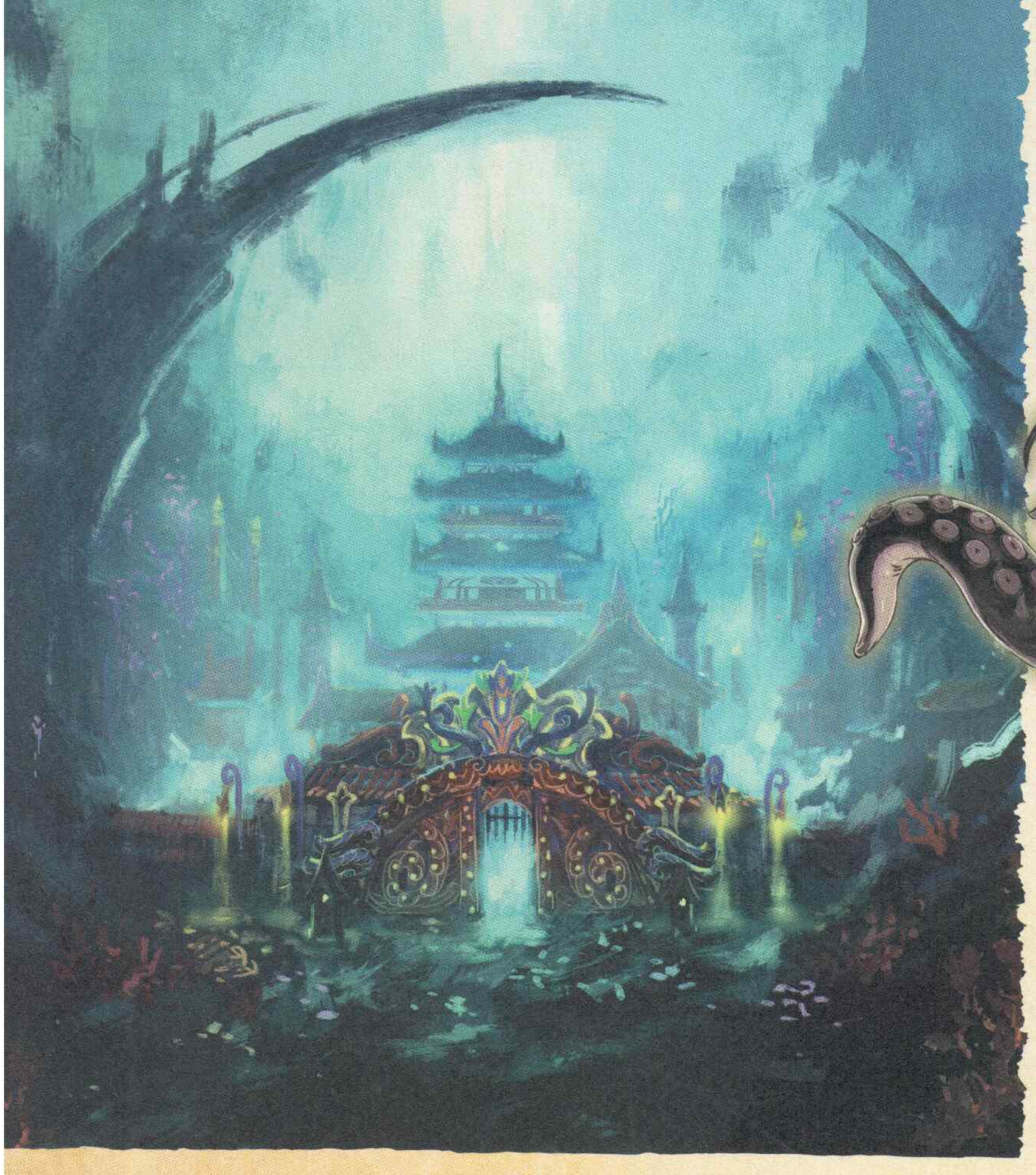
The palace is home to the Ruby Princess, ruler of Sui-no-Sato, who oversees religious rites within its sanctified grounds. Barring special leave, entry is forbidden even to citizens, and for long years what lay beyond the gates was shrouded in mystery. With the admittance of one adventurer, however, the world was afforded a rare glimpse beneath the veil. Stepping through the solitary ingress, one first comes upon the beauteous Sogyoku Piscary. A stroll through its coral-lined paths brings one to Harutsuge Gate, beyond which lies Kogyoku Palace, the stately residence of the Ruby Princess. Passing through these apartments, one finally arrives at Shisui Temple, where priests and priestesses conduct ceremonies under Her Grace's watchful gaze.

All of this had become the dominion of a voidsent, and the aforementioned adventurer was called upon to purge its dark presence and rescue the Ruby Princess. By virtue of his valor, we now have more than mere rumors to enlighten us.



The Ruby Princess

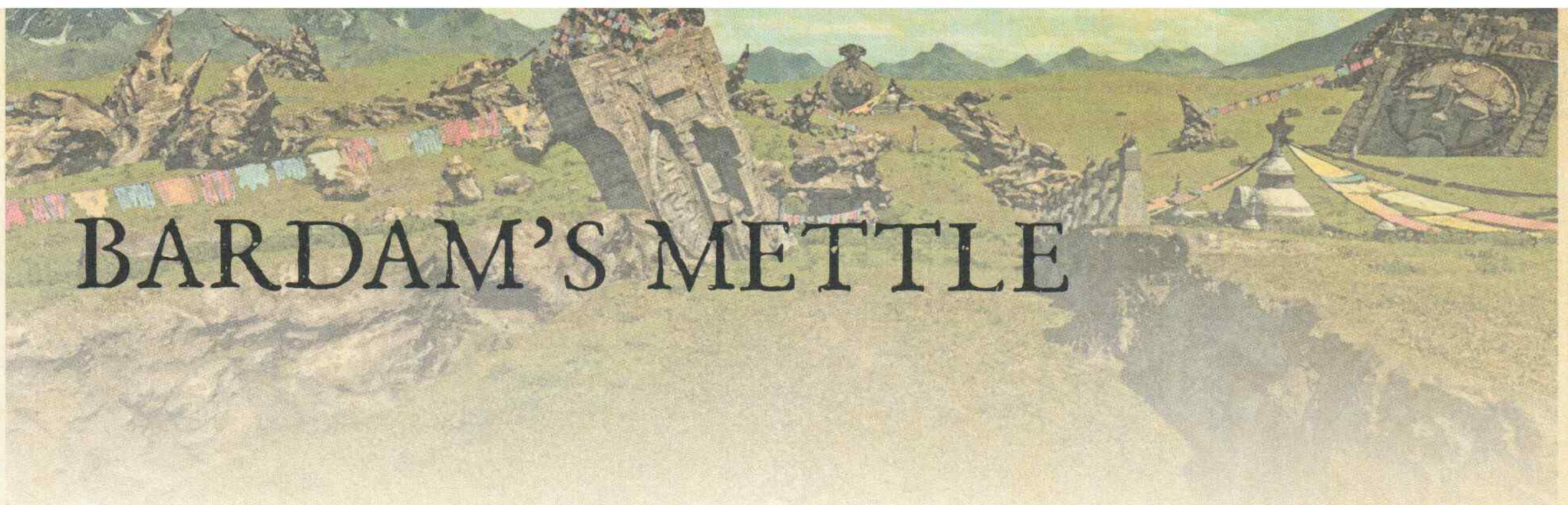
The Ruby Princess was found to be under the power of a voidsent, but with the creature's defeat, she was released from its grip and subsequently made a full recovery. Although the day was saved, in the event that the situation became untenable, one priest was prepared to destroy the dome encasing the palace, thereby engulfing all in the Ruby Sea.



Shisui Yohi

Upon manifesting in the palace, this immense voidsent moved to exert its influence upon the corporeal realm, employing its powerful enthrallment magicks to bring all nearby souls under its control, the Ruby Princess included. It is uncertain whether its tentacled form is its own or the result of its choice of vessel.

While Shisui's architectural style resembles those of Hingashi and Doma, in the adornments one may observe touches of the sea. From such differences, it may be stated that the Raen of Sui-no-Sato have established an identity distinct from their land-dwelling kin.



BARDAM'S METTLE

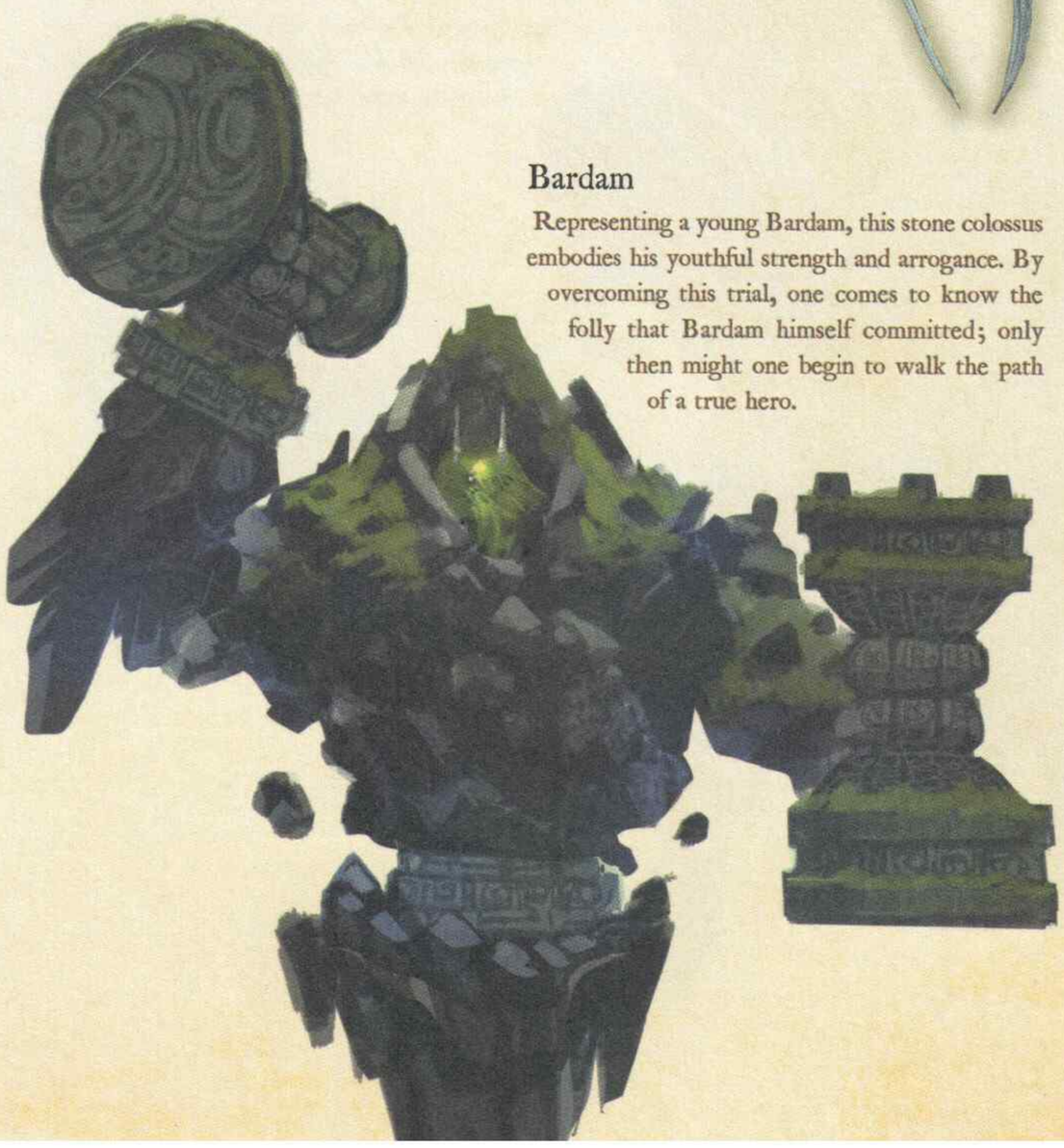
In the Footsteps of a Legend

Along the edges of the Azim Steppe, there wends a trail rife with danger said to have been blazed by a great hero of Xaela legend. Named Bardam's Mettle for the hero, braving it is a rite of passage for the youths of the Steppe. Completing the rite requires one to run a gauntlet of fearsome foes to reach an ancient altar, the oldest in the land, and thence tame a yol, a giant cloudkin. In so doing, one earns recognition as a warrior and is permitted to participate in the Naadam, the battle to decide the ruler of these vast fields.

As observed in the memoir *Narrow Road through the Deep Grass*, the trail symbolizes Bardam's life. A warrior of rare talent, the young Bardam was a boastful man, but his hubris brought him low and he found himself lying at death's door. Yet the gods saw fit to spare him, and he was prompted to reflect upon his ways. Keeping the lesson of his bitter defeat ever close to heart, he rose again to become perhaps the greatest hero in Xaela history, carving his name into their annals by triumphing in the very first Naadam. Long after his time, Bardam the Brave continues to inspire new generations of aspiring warriors, who walk in his footsteps in hopes of emulating his legend.

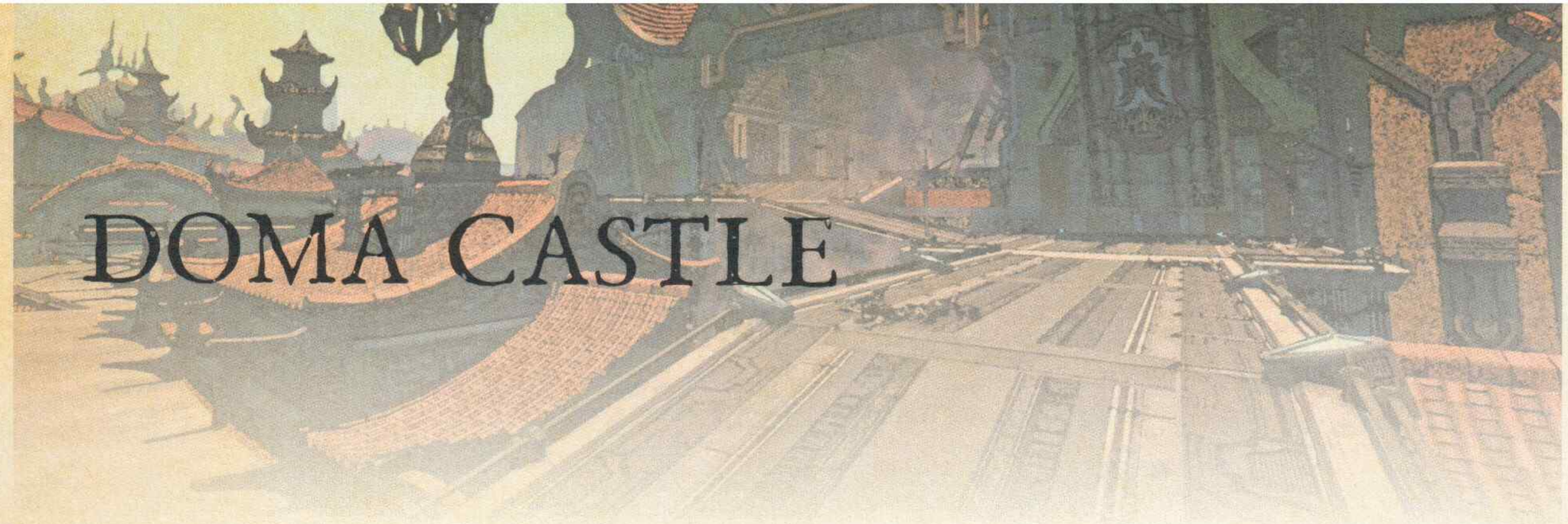
Yol

High atop the granite peaks of Othard's Fanged Crescent do the yol claim their demesne, descending to the Azim Steppe to prey upon the soft warriors who pretend not to fear the winged monsters of their ancestor's tales. Rare indeed is it that a yol might cede its back to the likes of man, though to those who have proved their mettle, the creatures have been known to make exception.



Bardam

Representing a young Bardam, this stone colossus embodies his youthful strength and arrogance. By overcoming this trial, one comes to know the folly that Bardam himself committed; only then might one begin to walk the path of a true hero.



DOMA CASTLE

With its vibrant ornamentation, the keep's interior was a veritable treat for the eyes. However, surrounded by her enemies, the acting viceroy Yotsuyu goe Brutus resorted to destroying the keep with explosives, leaving naught but rubble where once it proudly stood.

The Castle on the One River

Doma Castle is the seat of power of the nation of Doma, whose dominion encompasses the region of Yanxia. Positioned to control the One River, an artery of trade and transportation, it exploits the cascading waters of the Dragon's Struggle as a natural defense. Ordinarily, its proximity to the river would render it vulnerable to erosion and flooding, but the site had been subjected to a thorough survey by geomancers to ensure the stability of its earth and water energies. As such, save for when the Kojin blasted a hole in the riverside wall during the Liberation Front's siege, over the course of its six centuries, the castle has been little troubled by water. Instead, it was a fire that required the keep to be rebuilt on one of two occasions, the other being a planned reconstruction.

The castle is of a circular shape, with the keep situated behind three concentric walls. Two of these have stood since the beginning, while the third and outermost was erected some 250 years later. Sadly, no number of walls could have stopped the Garleans and their aerial onslaught. Since its fall twenty-five years ago, the castle has been the seat of the viceroy, and its facilities were expanded to include hangars for magitek weaponry.

Hypertuned Grynewaht

In the early stages of his experiments into the Resonant, Aulus mal Asina, the XIIth Imperial Legion's chief of research, conceived a means to augment the flesh with machina, and the much-changed Grynewaht who joined Doma Castle's defense was a product of this technique. Attached to the Roegadyn's back was a contraption that siphoned out his blood and infused it with fortifying chemicals.

Magitek Hexadrone

This new model of warmachina was delivered to Doma Castle on the occasion of the inspection visit by Zenos yae Galvus, Legatus of the XIIth Imperial Legion. Though intended for open-field warfare, it saw emergency deployment when the castle came under siege and was destroyed by a band of adventurers.

CASTRUM ABANIA

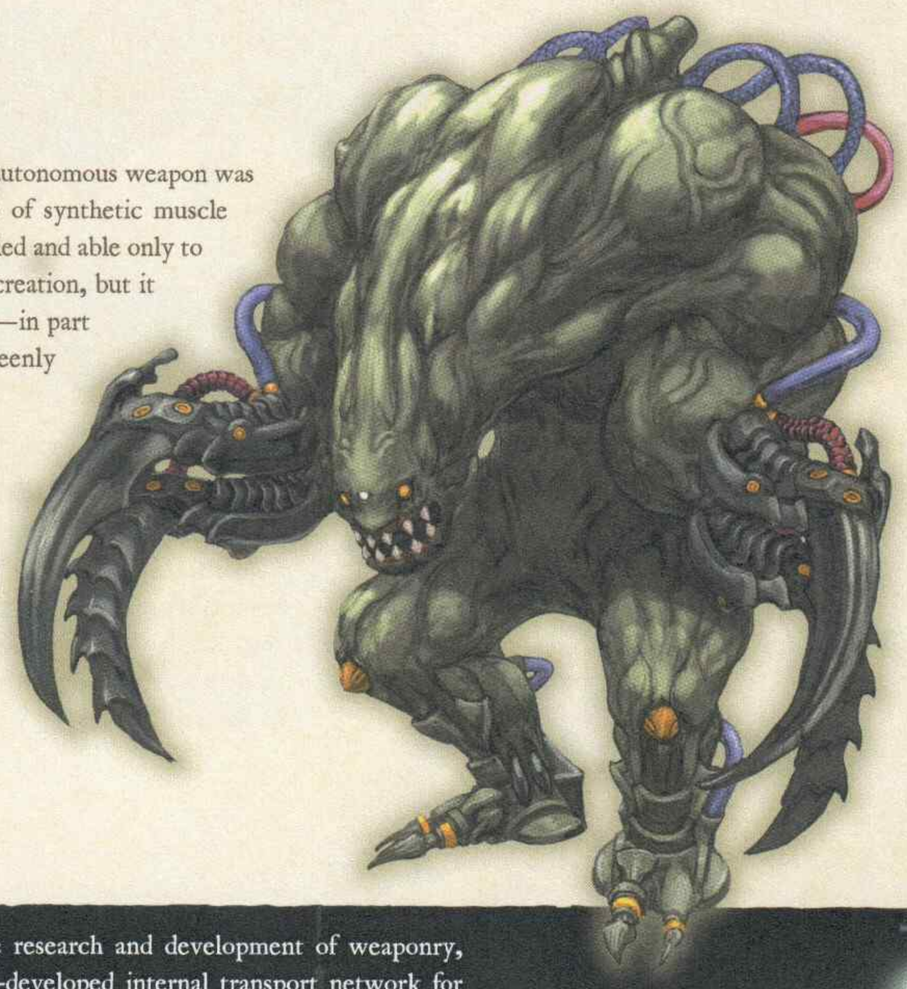
The Fire-breathing Fortress

Situated on the eastern edge of the Peaks region, this imperial citadel is immediately recognizable by its massive cannon, whose menacing silhouette is visible scores of malms away. Such a weapon was constructed for the purpose of bringing down targets as prodigious as Midgardsormr, but it was no less effective against men, as was made plain during the siege of Specula Imperatoris. Heedless of their comrades fighting within, the Garleans turned the cannon on their own stronghold, inflicting grievous casualties on both sides.

As the war for Ala Mhigo's liberation approached its climax, the armies of the Alliance and the Resistance sought to capture the castrum, but they could not march upon it for fear of the cannon's barrage. A plan was devised which saw a small contingent infiltrate the garrison and secure control of the weapon. With it thus rendered dormant, the Eorzean Alliance was free to strike, and strike it did with overwhelming force to wrest the castrum from the Empire and secure a crucial foothold in the struggle.

Number XXIV

Aulus mal Asina sought to infuse pureblood Garleans with the ability to manipulate aether, and with his twenty-fourth subject he finally succeeded. The experiment was not without side effects, however, and the subject exhibited psychological instability. With further live testing, the scientist would go on to create the Resonant.



Inferno

More monster than machina, this autonomous weapon was born of an accident in the course of synthetic muscle development. Unable to be controlled and able only to destroy, it was essentially a failed creation, but it found use in the castrum's defense—in part to test its endurance—and was keenly observed by its creator, Aulus.

Housing also a facility for the research and development of weaponry, Castrum Abania boasts a well-developed internal transport network for conveying prototypes and provisions.

ALA MHIGO

Liberty or Death

Having conquered all the lands of Gyr Abania, King Anshelm ordered the construction of a fortress city that would serve to repel invaders from Ilsabard. Completed in the year 1135 of the Sixth Astral Era, it stood as a symbol of defiance until it fell to the Empire, whereupon it became a symbol of oppression.

In the twenty years that it lay under Garlean rule, little of Ala Mhigo appears to have changed, but upon closer inspection there are imperial touches in evidence, from magitek street lamps to advanced water and sewage systems. However, such improvements to civic life were privileges enjoyed only by imperial citizens. Those without citizenship, or the "Aan," were consigned to hard, destitute lives in the Ala Mhigan Quarter, the purpose-built district for the lower class.

Like the rest of the city, the royal palace was allowed to retain its pre-imperial style. Yet beneath the skin, it had been fortified with a multitude of cannons and powerful magitek fields, which greeted the sieging forces of the Eorzean Alliance and the Ala Mhigan Resistance.

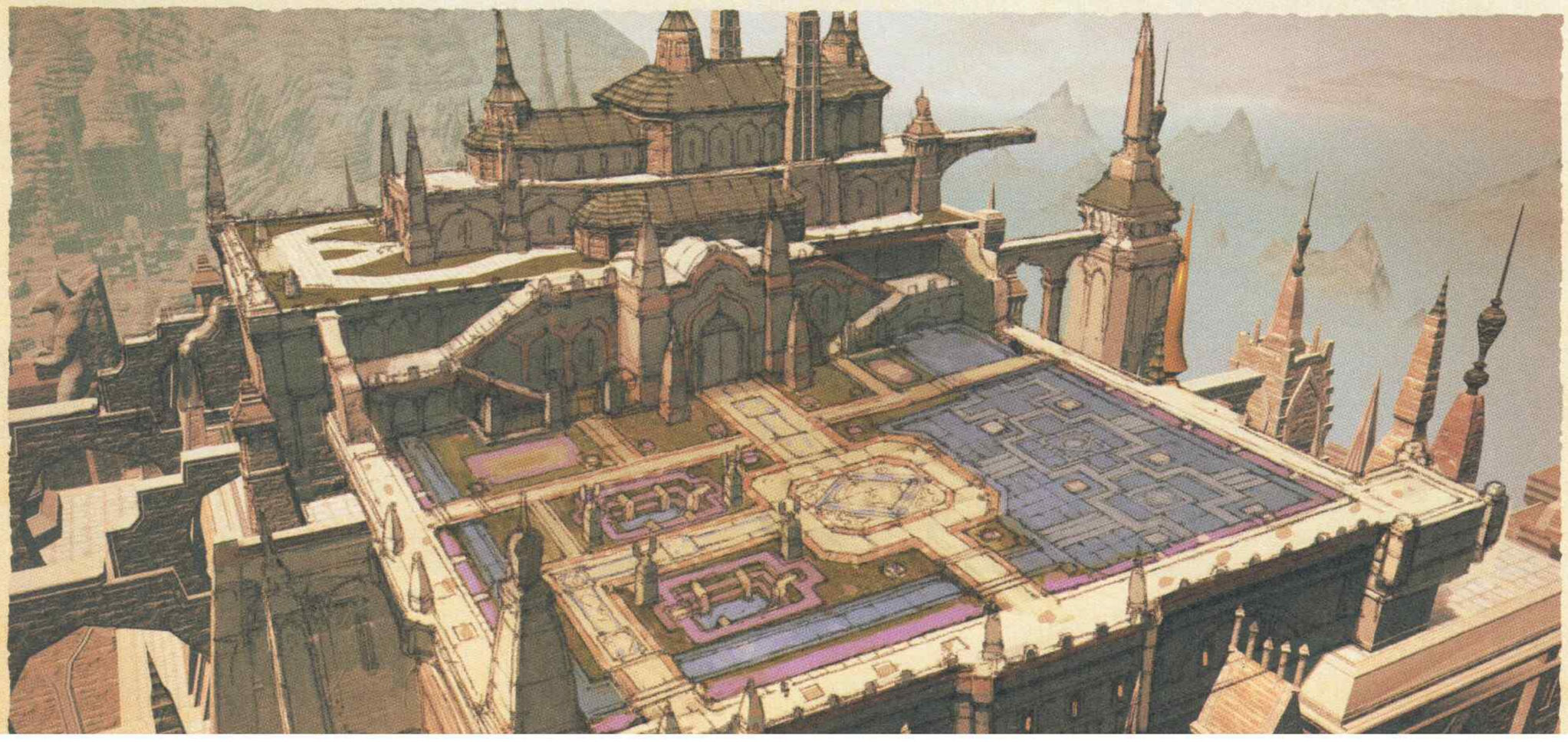
Aulus mal Asina

Chief of research of the XIIth Imperial Legion, Aulus personally joined the fray during the siege of Ala Mhigo. Confronting the heroes of Eorzea upon a magitek conveyor, he employed a weapon of his own creation which ripped their minds from their bodies. In this way he had intended to demonstrate his superiority, but his plan went awry and he died in vain.

Zenos yae Galvus

Legatus of the XIIth Imperial Legion and crown prince of Garlemald, Zenos's high birth and extraordinary talents rendered his life wanting for purpose. During a mission in Gyr Abania, however, he encountered a foe who would kindle in him theretofore unfelt ardor: the Warrior of Light. Against this foe, Zenos would bring his all to bear, wielding the katana Ame-no-Habakiri, his powers as a Resonant—and even the might of the primal Shinryu.

Upon the rooftop of the royal palace, King Theodoric had built for his foreign queen a garden where familiar creatures from her homeland were kept. Under imperial rule, it was maintained for the pleasure of high-ranking officers.



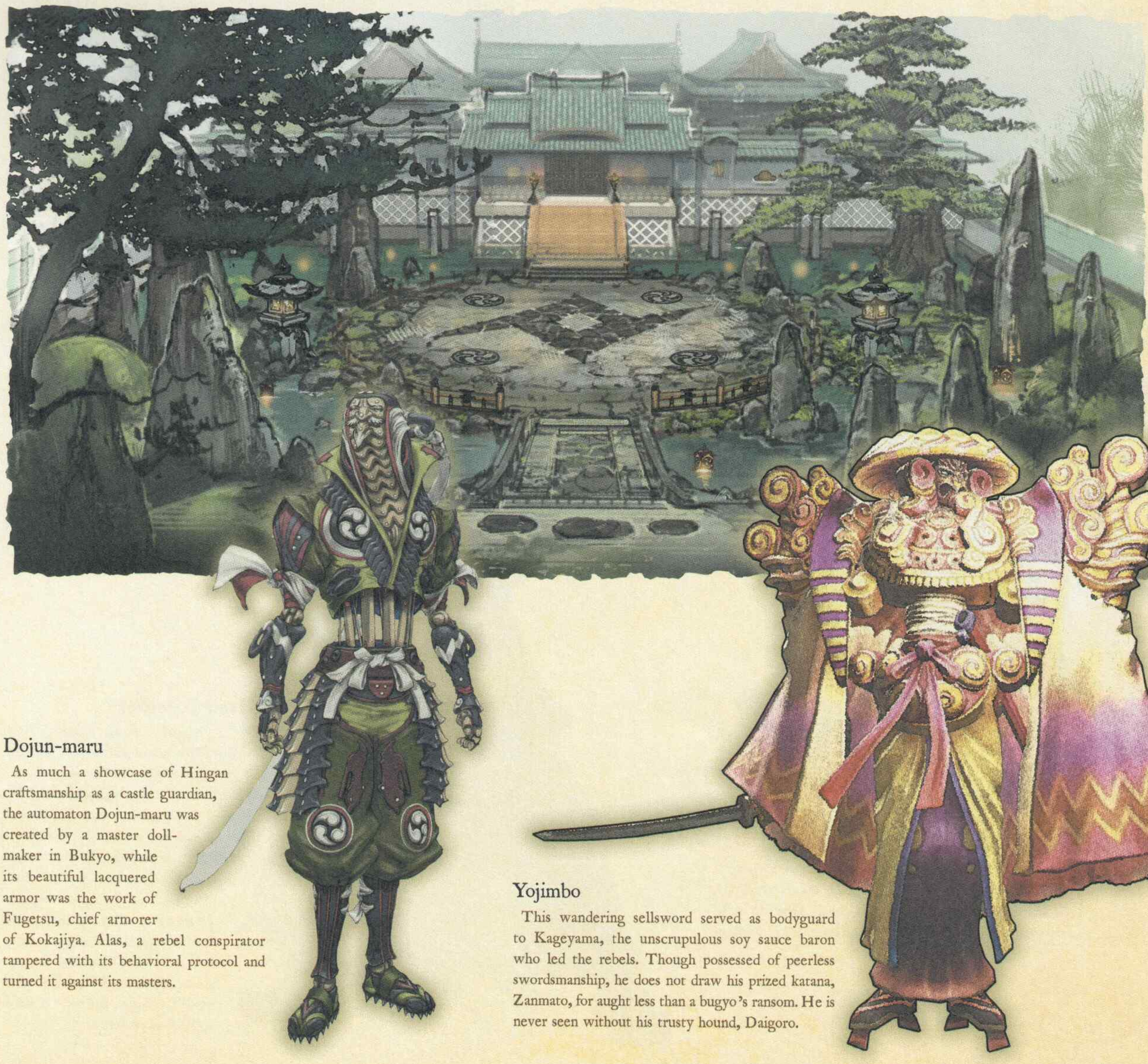
KUGANE CASTLE

The Shining Symbol of Hingashi

As the first sight of Hingashi that visitors are like to glimpse, this majestic castle standing guard over the port city of Kugane was built to be visually striking. In a departure from conventional castle design, the keep is situated not behind the walls but in alignment with them, rising atop a separate stone base as the centerpiece of a bridge extending to the north and south. This layout provides an unobstructed view of the towering keep from the port, and those sailing in can scarcely miss the mitsudomoe emblem of the Mitsurugi clan—the rulers of Hingashi—prominently set upon the structure's façade.

The castle's uniqueness does not end without. As a stage for diplomacy, it boasts amenities and amusements not seen in utilitarian castles to provide visiting ambassadors and merchants with the finest hospitality. In front of Ni-no-Maru Manor, where dignitaries are welcomed, is the Keisen Garden with its stunning pond. And inside Hon-maru, the castle's inner ward, are the Budokan Training Grounds and the Noh Theater, which host regular performances to introduce Hingan culture to foreigners.

As a performance was unfolding in the Noh Theater, anti-foreigner rebels stormed the castle and took all present captive. But owing to the swift and valorous actions of adventurers and the Sekiseigumi, these villains were subdued and the hostages freed.



Dojun-maru

As much a showcase of Hingan craftsmanship as a castle guardian, the automaton Dojun-maru was created by a master doll-maker in Bukyo, while its beautiful lacquered armor was the work of Fugetsu, chief armorer of Kokajiya. Alas, a rebel conspirator tampered with its behavioral protocol and turned it against its masters.

Yojimbo

This wandering sellsword served as bodyguard to Kageyama, the unscrupulous soy sauce baron who led the rebels. Though possessed of peerless swordsmanship, he does not draw his prized katana, Zanmato, for aught less than a bugyo's ransom. He is never seen without his trusty hound, Daigoro.

THE TEMPLE OF THE FIST

The Path to Rhalgr

During the great deluge of the Sixth Umbral Calamity, it is said that Rhalgr sent a star to guide the forebears of the Ala Mhigan people to safety in the mountains of Gyr Abania. The ground where the star came to its rest was held as sacred and drew pilgrims from far and wide. Seeking to be closer to the Destroyer, this loose congregation of worshipers built a temple at the summit of a mountain by carving back the bare rock. Thus was born the Temple of the Fist, the main bastion of the Fist of Rhalgr.

Ere long, the climb to pay pilgrimage to the temple came to be regarded as part of the spiritual journey for the faithful, and for this purpose a dedicated path was created: the Way of Enlightenment. Yet this was no leisurely stroll. Aside from being precariously steep, the way was outfitted with an array of traps and obstacles which tested flesh and faith both. In time, this grueling route would be adopted as a trial for those who aspired to monkhood.

Alas, the Fist of Rhalgr would incur the wrath of King Theodoric, who saw the Temple of the Fist razed and its inhabitants slaughtered. Imperial rule further saw all religious practices oppressed, and for two decades nary a soul has set foot within its grounds.

Within the innermost sanctum of the temple lies a chamber named Guidance. Scripture holds that those who make it this far are given the chance to prove themselves further—against the spirit of a great monk of eld.

Arbuda

This four-armed golem was created to train monks, who competed to defeat it in the shortest time possible. Contestants were awarded ranks named for various beasts which were, in ascending order: mossling, chapuli, gazelle, coeurl, griffin, and two-headed coeurl. One last rank exists to crown them all, and it is named for the Destroyer Himself.

Ivon Coeurlfist

A legend among monks, Ivon Coeurlfist honed his martial prowess by wandering the mountains and fighting coeurls. He is also credited for creating the Sphairai, a powerful pair of fists shaped in the likeness of coeurls. According to scripture, such was his dedication to his faith and art that, even after his death, his essence persisted in the corporeal realm that he might continue his training forevermore. There are reports that an adventurer fought his spirit inside Guidance, but there is little in the way of details.

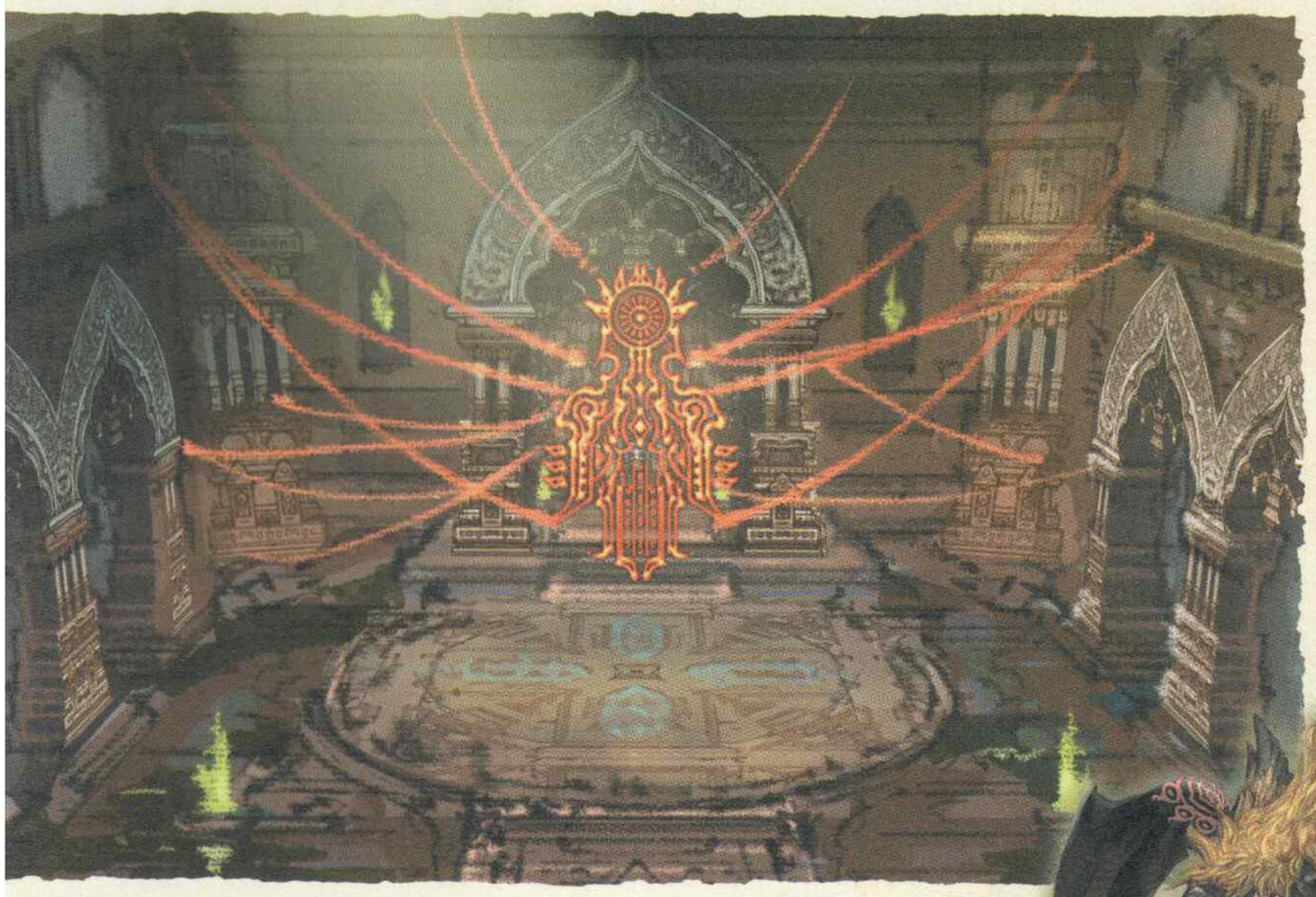
THE DROWNED CITY OF SKALLA

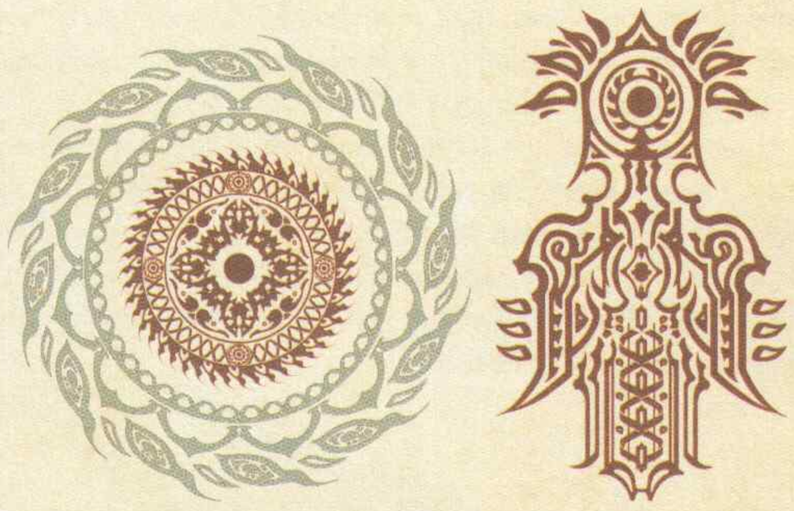
Remnants of the Fifth Astral Era

Long ago, in the dawn of the Fifth Astral Era, the modest nation of Skalla was founded in the land of Gyr Abania. Over the span of several centuries, its people constructed a grand city of stone at the bottom of a steep-walled ravine, but even this natural defense could not protect Skalla from destruction during a terrible age of war. When the great flood of the Sixth Umbral Calamity later swept across the realm, the hollow ruins of the city were lost to sight, its remnants submerged beneath a raging sea.

Over a thousand years later, the city of Ala Mhigo would be built atop Skalla's forgotten grave in the salt-laden depths of Loch Seld. Yet some few remembered, among them the last king of Ala Mhigo, Theodoric. Towards the end of his brutal reign, growing ever more paranoid over imagined threats to his crown, he had his own family members imprisoned on invented charges. Their wealth was seized and hidden away within the ruins of Skalla, while they themselves were put to guarding it—as abominations transformed by court thaumaturges.

These dark truths were brought to light following Ala Mhigo's liberation, in the course of an investigation by the Scions of the Seventh Dawn. Braving the horrors that lurked Skalla's crumbling halls, they discovered a veritable mountain of riches: the mad king's legendary trove. In a heartwarming tale with which no few readers will already be familiar, the treasure was placed in the hands of Ala Mhigo's interim government to be used to rebuild the nation and provide relief to the poor.





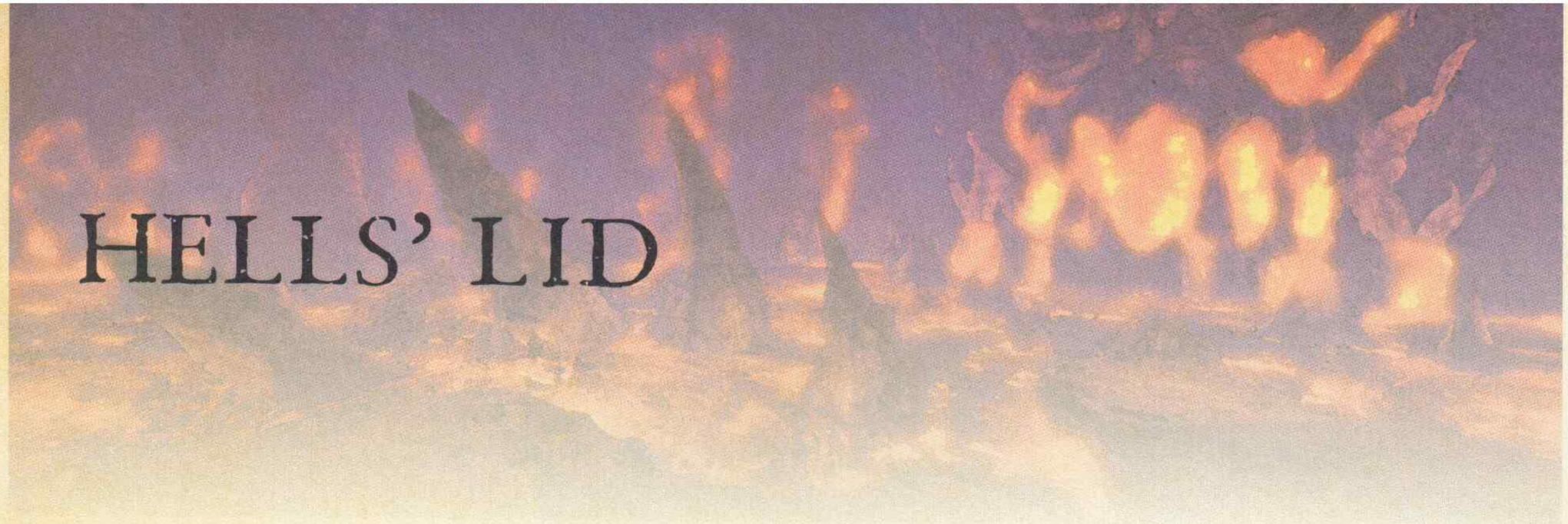
Suspicious of his own countrymen, Theodoric instead appointed foreign mages to his court. The distinctive brands of enchantment observed throughout the ruins of Skalla are suspected to be their handiwork.

The Old One

Encountered within the halls of Skalla, this animated guardian's clay body is somehow evocative of the Far East. While its actual origin is unclear, it was likely borne to Ala Mhigo during the city-state's days as a waypoint for trade.

Hrodric Poisontongue

Cousin to Theodoric, the last king of Ala Mhigo, the noble-born Hrodric was fifth in line to the throne. Compelled by an unwavering sense of justice, he made frequent attempts to counsel and calm the volatile monarch, but such efforts were construed an act of treason. Sentenced for his crime, Hrodric suffered a terrible punishment, and was cursed to forever inhabit the form of a monstrous beast.



HELLS' LID

An Island of Legend

Endless rivers of molten lava flow from this volcanic island into the waters of the Ruby Sea, a testament to the incontestable power of nature. Coupled with the plumes of dark smoke which perpetually foul the air, it is not hard to understand why legends arose describing Hells' Lid as the domain of terrible, man-eating oni.

The most prominent of these stories is the faerie tale known as the Tale of Tenzen. Under the orders of a king, the samurai Tenzen went forth to Hells' Lid, and with the help of the Four Lords did he drive a host of oni into the sea. Rewarded with treasures untold, he thence journeyed into the mountains with his four companions, there to live out the rest of their years in peace. These days, it is thought that the oni in the tale were likely the Kojin, but rumors suggest that a different truth yet lurks beneath the island's volatile surface.

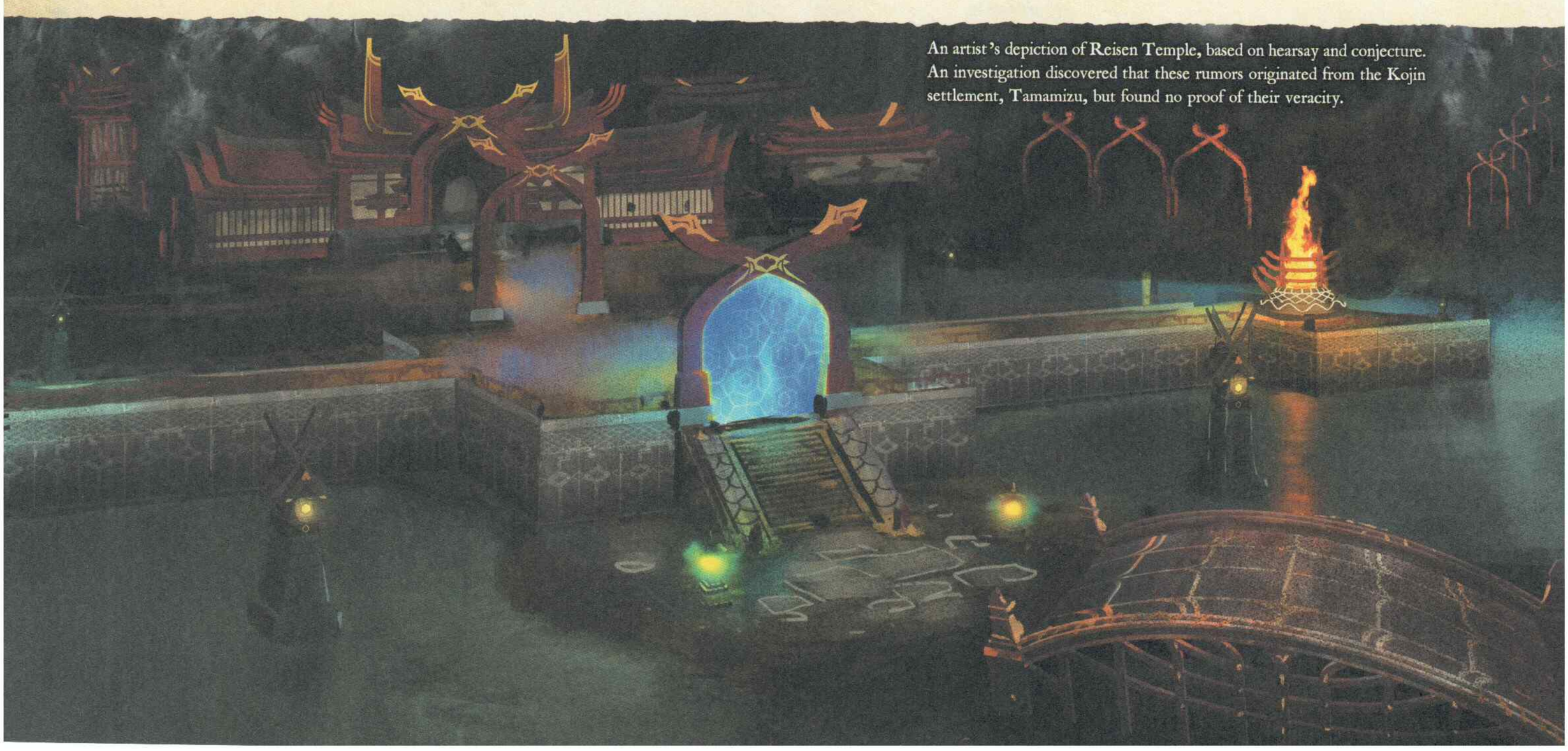
Some claim that it was not demons which Tenzen went to slay, but an auspice known as Koryu. And that in failing to fully vanquish the beast, he instead sealed it away in the depths of Hells' Lid. Some also say that Reisen Temple, built by the Four Lords, exists to preserve the wards which cage this most dangerous of prisoners.

Otake-maru

Within the depths of Hells' Lid crouches an enormous oni of magical origin, created to give credence to the Tale of Tenzen and thereby conceal the existence of Koryu. A construct manifested by Genbu's divine power, Otake-maru is charged with chasing off any who wander into his domain.

Kamaitachi

The Four Lords count many auspices under their rule, and are said to watch each other closely for signs of growing madness. There have been reports in the Ruby Sea and in Yanxia of "Kamaitachi," a long, sinuous creature of pale color who may yet be another such mystical beast.



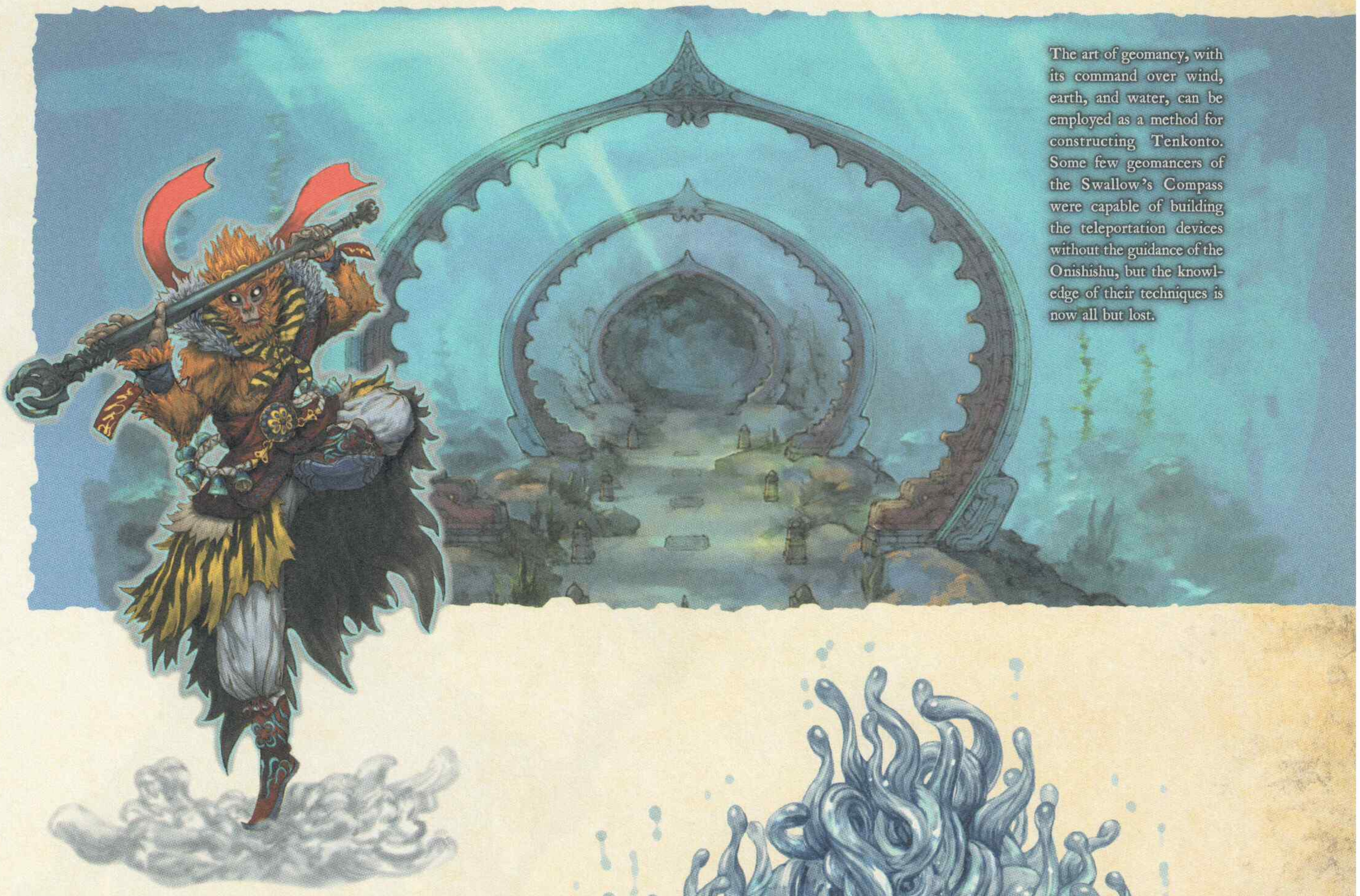
An artist's depiction of Reisen Temple, based on hearsay and conjecture. An investigation discovered that these rumors originated from the Kojin settlement, Tamamizu, but found no proof of their veracity.

THE SWALLOW'S COMPASS

The Birthplace of Doman Geomancy

Chiseled into the great wall which cuts across the plains of Yanxia, between two of the Dairyu Moon Gates, is the visage of Ganen, the legendary hero who united Doma. The first king of the new kingdom was not only a military genius, but also a master geomancer, and after his death this royal mausoleum became a holy site to which his disciples would make pilgrimage. Even from Hingashi and beyond, academics and monks would come to gather at what is known as the birthplace of Doman geomancy.

Such scholarly congregations were dispersed by the invading Empire. Deeming the near-deified Ganen a potential primal threat, the imperial viceroy of Doma ordered the king's tomb sealed shut. The geomancers' place of study was abandoned, and the Swallow's Compass fell into disrepair.



The art of geomancy, with its command over wind, earth, and water, can be employed as a method for constructing Tenkonto. Some few geomancers of the Swallow's Compass were capable of building the teleportation devices without the guidance of the Onishishu, but the knowledge of their techniques is now all but lost.

Qitian Dasheng

As with others of his ilk, this simian auspice gained divine might after enduring a millennium of life. Qitian Dasheng, whose title means "Great Sage, Heaven's Equal," dwelled in the Swallow's Compass to prevent his master's creation—the tamate-bako of geomancy—from falling into unscrupulous hands.

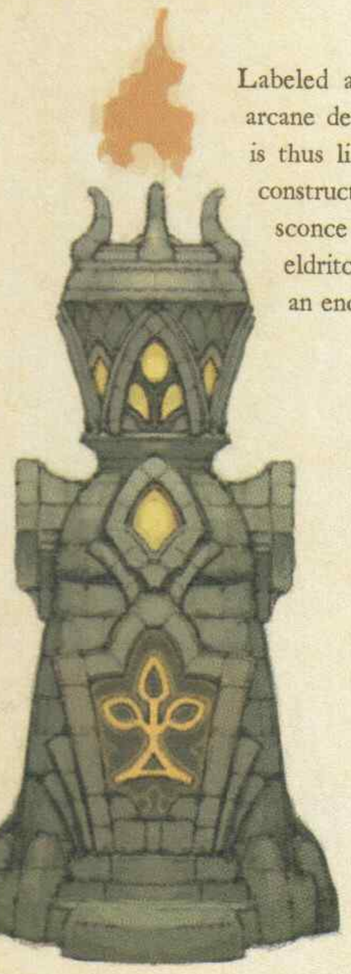
Daidarabotchi

Described in ancient legend, these gargantuan entities are said to be the creators of mountains or lakes. Pronunciation differs slightly by region, with minor variations such as "deidarabotchi." But whatever the name given, attempts by a succession of occultists to bring this legendary being to life has resulted in the conception of countless abominations. The Swallow's Compass geomancers, too, appeared unable to resist creating their own watery behemoth.

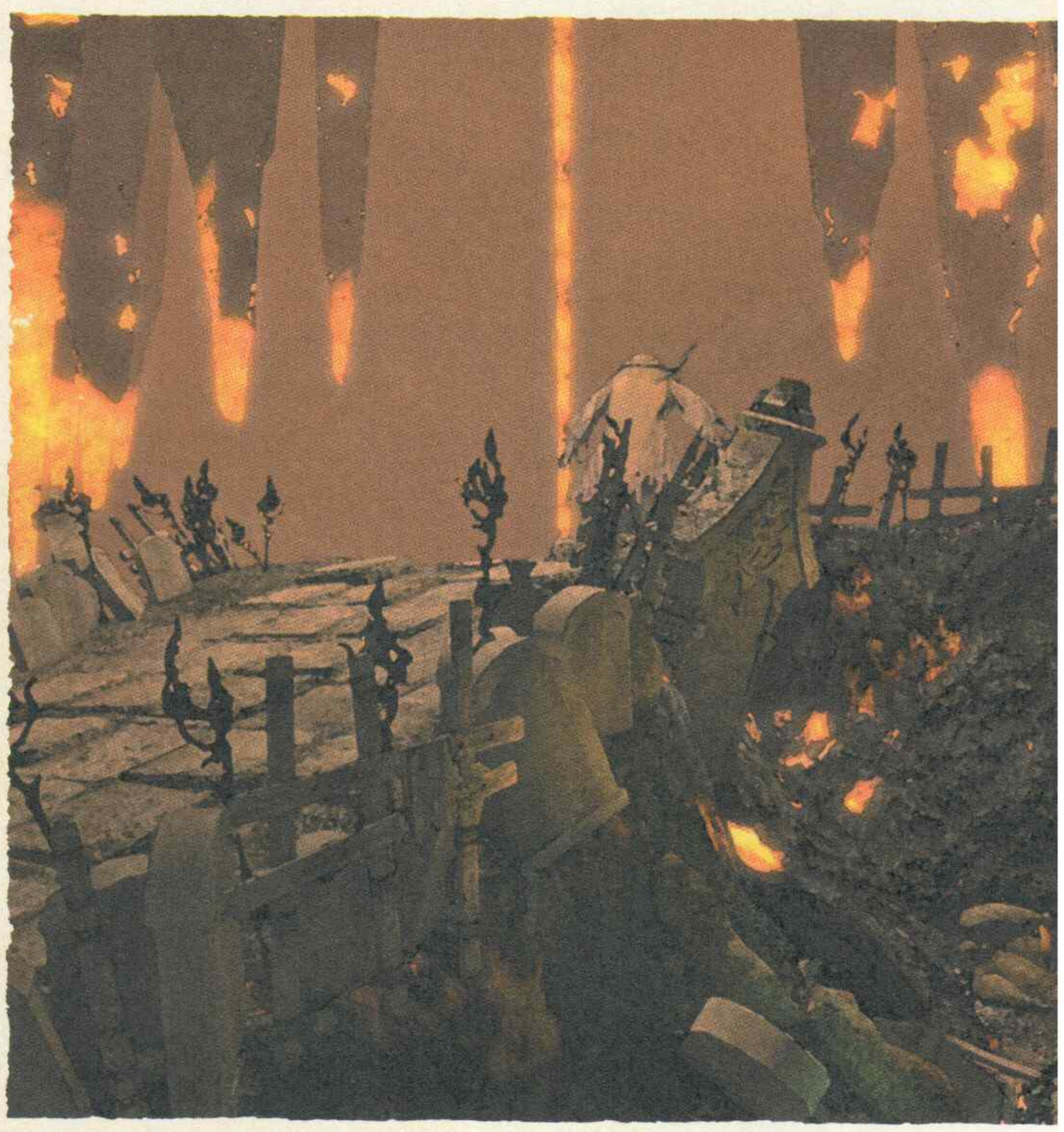
THE PALACE OF THE DEAD

A Maddening Labyrinth

The entrance to a labyrinthine dungeon was uncovered in the subterranean city of Gelmorra, deep within a forgotten corner of Issom-Har. An irresistible fog of enervation drains the vigor of those who set foot inside its maddening halls, and repeated excursions have failed to map its seemingly inconstant architecture. After hearing chilling accounts of spectral denizens, locals took to whispering of a "Palace of the Dead," and the Wood Wailers turned to adventurers to assist with laying bare its secrets.



Labeled a "Cairn of Return" by adventurers, this arcane device bears the holy symbol of Nophica, and is thus likely an artifact of Gelmorra. The artifact's construction, however, serves the purpose of a mundane sconce and nothing more—some suggest that any eldritch properties it now possesses were imbued by an enchantment originating from without the ruins.

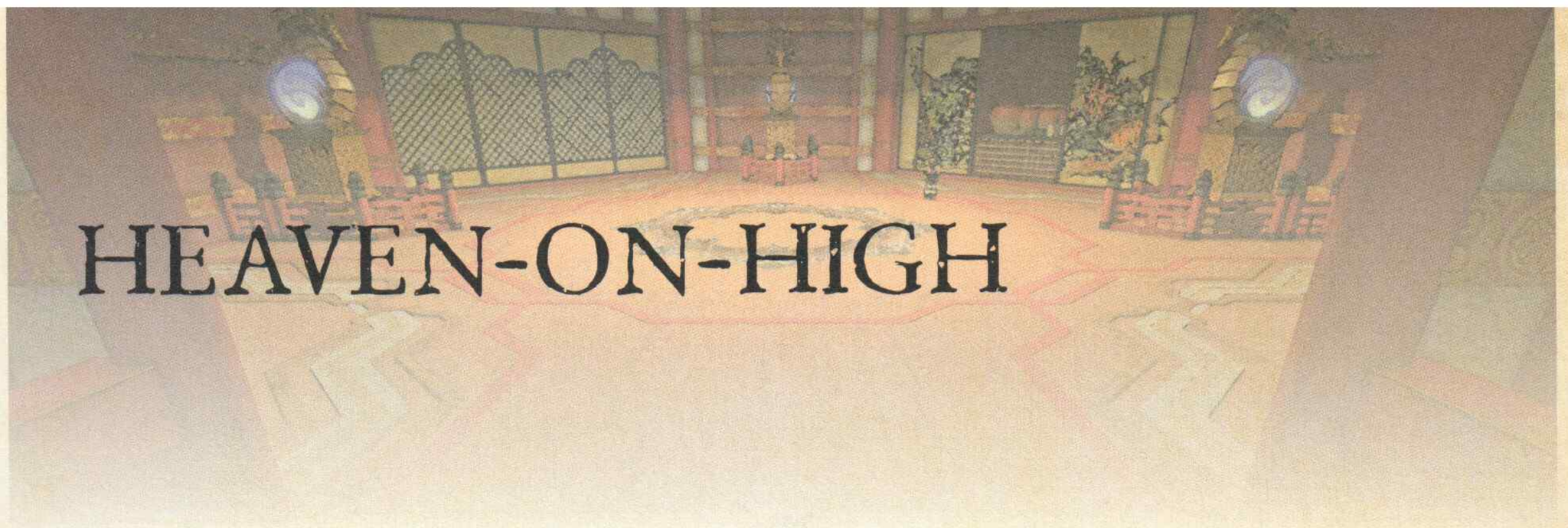


Edda Blackbosom

A girl thought to be Edda, a missing adventurer, has been spotted within the Palace of the Dead. Suspected of dabbling in necromancy, the erstwhile conjurer may even be involved in birthing the horrors of the haunted labyrinth. Another theory suggests that she may already be dead, and, in the same manner as the other spectral denizens, has become a pawn to some malevolent power.

Nybeth Obdilord

According to the testimony of an intrepid adventurer, this undead necromancer was encountered in the depths of the Palace of the Dead. Nybeth Obdilord claimed himself the master of the shifting maze, and spoke of pursuing the secrets of immortality. Beyond this, however, little is known of his origins or his purpose.



HEAVEN-ON-HIGH

The Pillar of the Kami

Rising from the isle of Onokoro on the Ruby Sea and disappearing unto the heavens, this monumental and mysterious tower has been the subject of rife speculation since ancient times. Be it a ladder by which the gods graced their creation or a lift by which the ancients reached the moon, its legends are as diverse as they are plentiful. Despite the abundance of interest, however, there has been a dearth of discoveries pertaining to Heaven-on-High. For the pall of superstition has ever lain thick about the isle, promising divine wrath, and its occupation by Confederate forces in recent years has added a very tangible deterrent to investigation.

Amidst this benighted state of affairs, a member of the Confederacy has come forward to shed light upon the truth of Heaven-on-High. Speaking on condition of anonymity, the individual claims that the tower was built in the distant past by an advanced people. That it serves as a proving ground for heroes who may one day deliver the world from calamity. That its interior teems with fell fiends, and by striving for the apex, one might hone body, mind, and spirit. While it indeed makes for compelling storytelling, for want of any evidence, for now we can but regard it as another myth among many.

Hiruko

According to myth, an unfinished kami named Hiruko washed up on the shores of Onokoro. If there is any truth to the tale, he may well have taken up residence within Heaven-on-High.

An artist's depiction of the tower's apex. Said to be unreachable even by airships, what is actually to be found there is like to remain a mystery.

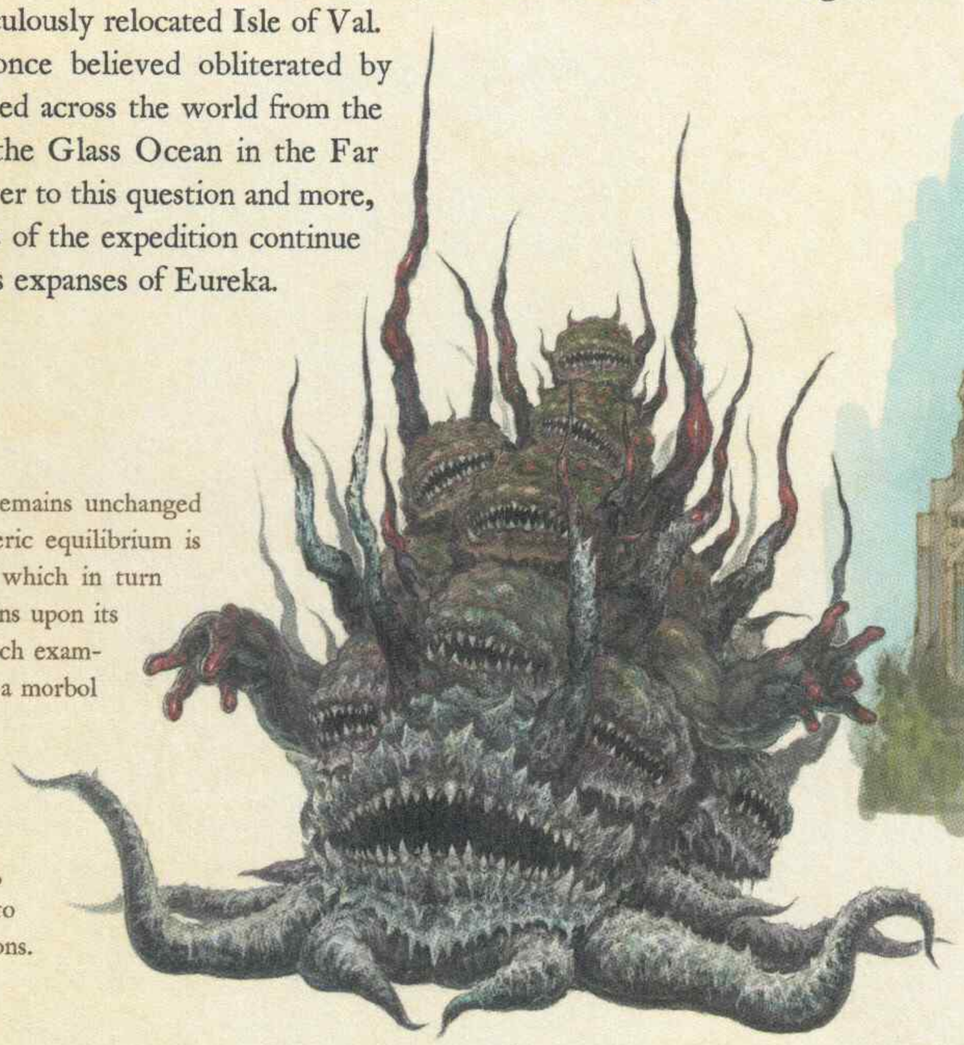
THE FORBIDDEN LAND, EUREKA

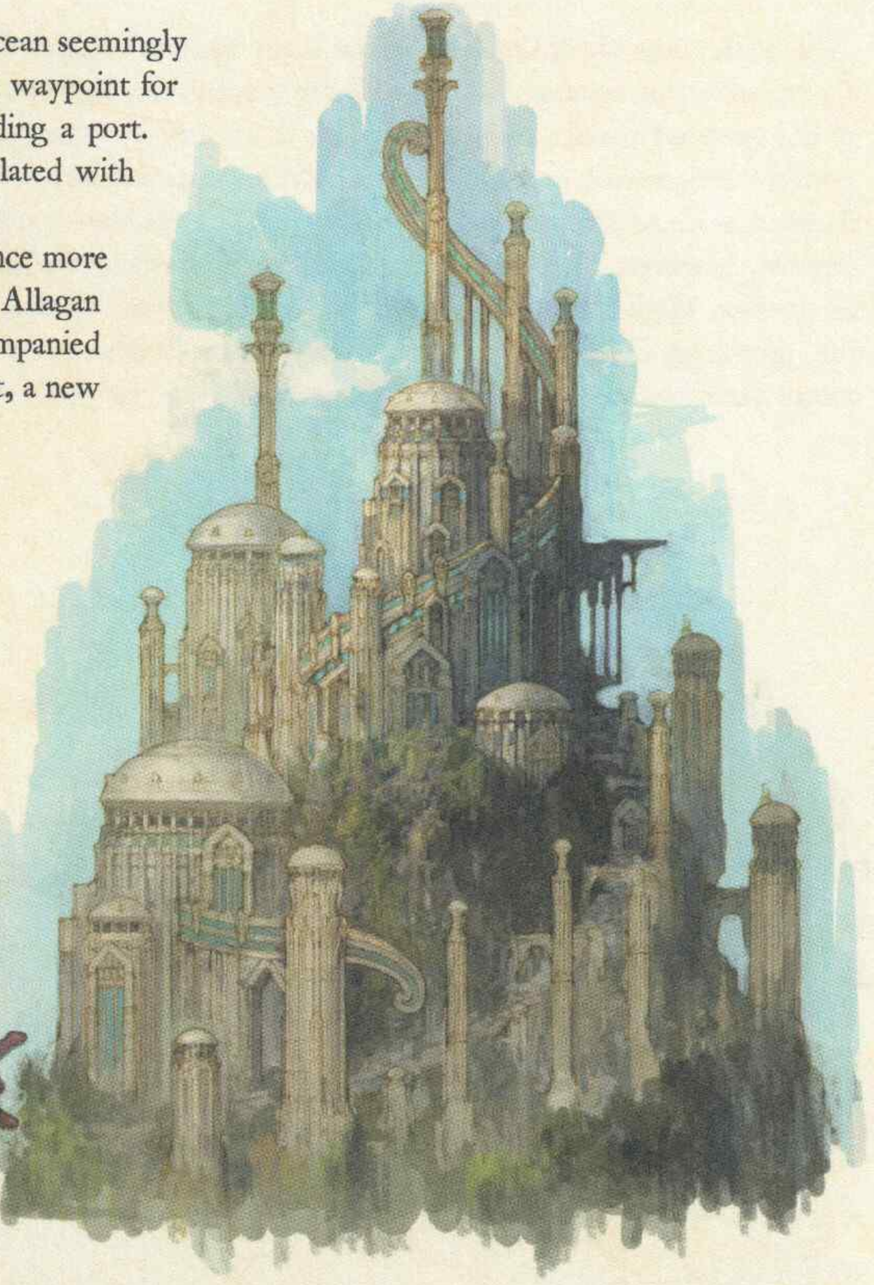
The Uncharted Isle

Unmarked on any navigational chart, this island appeared in the vastness of the Glass Ocean seemingly overnight. The East Aldenard Trading Company welcomed the discovery as a potential waypoint for their interests in the region, and sent an expedition to evaluate the possibility of building a port. What greeted the explorers was an environment warped by elemental forces and populated with violent monstrosities.

Thus was a second expedition formed, its ranks bolstered by veteran adventurers, and once more did it depart for the shores of "Eureka"—a tentative name for a forbidden land, taken from Allagan legend. The expedition landed safely, and, thanks to the Students of Baldesion who accompanied it, soon unraveled the first thread of the island's mystery. Eureka was not, as first thought, a new landmass, but the miraculously relocated Isle of Val.

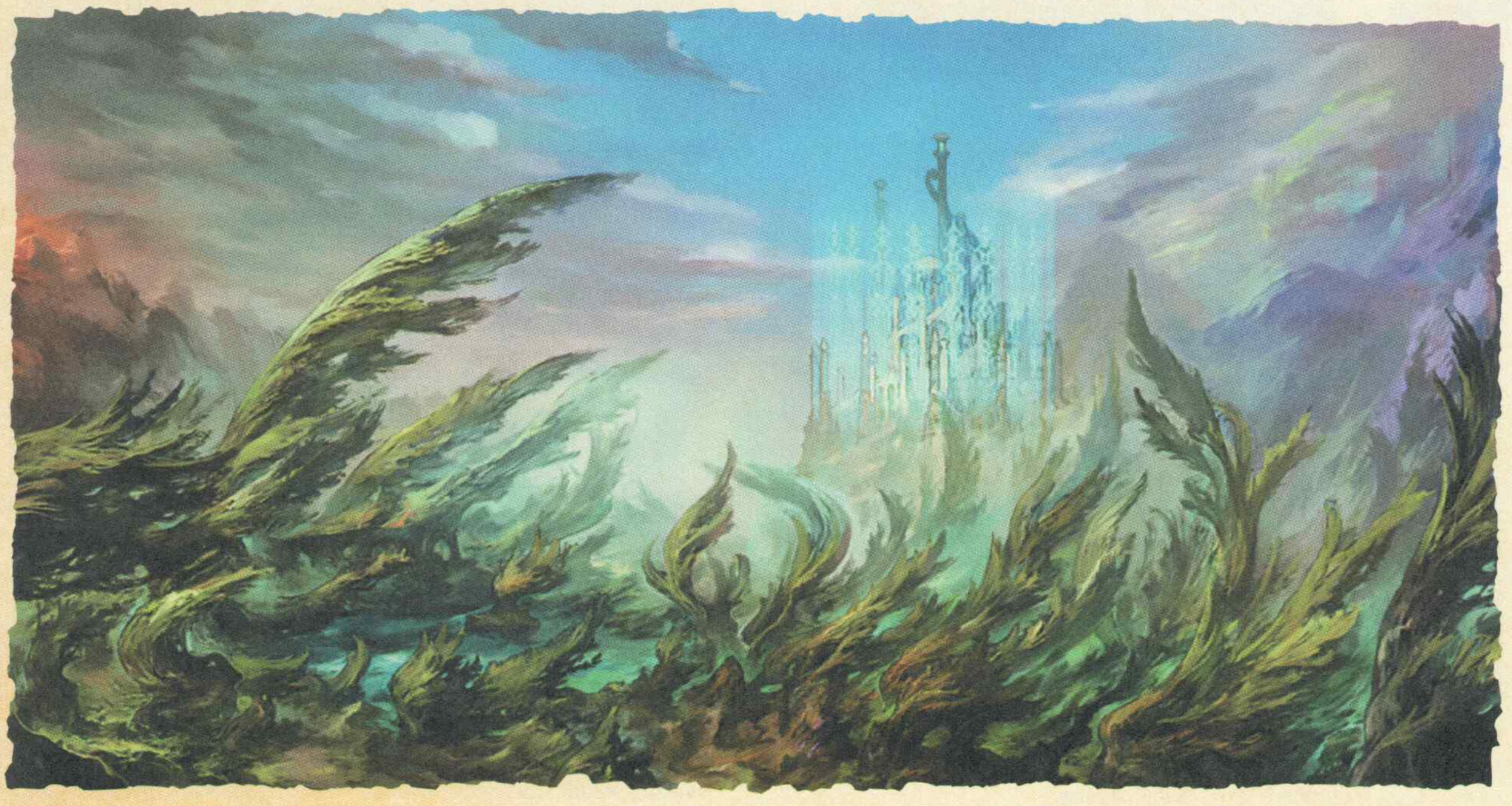
How had the isle, once believed obliterated by powerful magicks, shifted across the world from the coast of Sharlayan to the Glass Ocean in the Far East? To find the answer to this question and more, the assembled members of the expedition continue to survey the dangerous expanses of Eureka.





Copycat Cassie

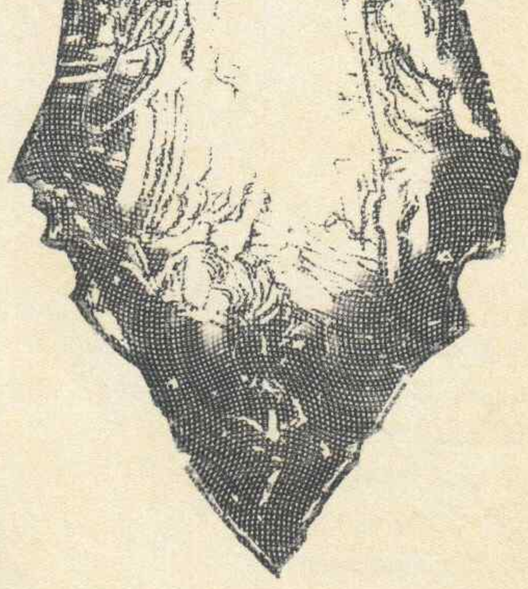
Though the Isle of Val remains unchanged in its topography, its aetheric equilibrium is distorted beyond measure, which in turn has worked bizarre alterations upon its monstrous denizens. One such example of this transformation is a morbol dubbed "Copycat Cassie" by adventurers familiar with its Black Shroud namesake. Sheathed in ice and writhing with tendrils, this specimen has grown to truly inconceivable proportions.



Encyciopædia Eorzea II

BOOK
VI

HER DESIGNS



RED MAGE

The War of the Magi was a cataclysmic battle fought between the black mages of Mhach and the white mages of Amdapor. When calamity struck, members of both orders joined hands to weave a new kind of sorcery with which to resist their encroaching doom. The practitioners of this art became known as "red mages."

History

At the end of the Fifth Astral Era, a streaking comet guided disparate bands of refugees into the mountains of Gyr Abania to escape the floods of the Sixth Umbral Calamity. Amongst these bedraggled survivors were mages of both Mhach and Amdapor. A sorcerous battle would soon have ensued had the war still raged, but the needs of survival outweighed their enmity, and nurtured the spirit of cooperation. Black and white magicks were abhorred for their role in leeching the land's aether and bringing about realm-wide disaster, yet it was agreed that the power of the arcane could help rebuild what was lost. Thus did the refugee mages seek to make amends for their mistakes by establishing a new school of spellcraft—an aether-efficient discipline which drew only upon the wielder's own mana. What they created was an art to overcome adversity, otherwise known as "red magic."

In the desperate years following the Calamity, its practitioners devoted themselves to protecting the survivors, and saved many lives in the process. But as prosperity returned along with the dawning of a new Astral Era, fewer and fewer students took up the red, and the memory of red mages slowly faded from the world.

Equipment

Duelist's Attire

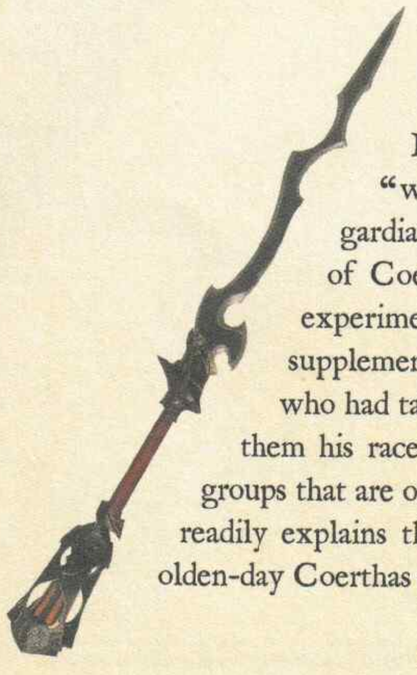
For their willingness to fling themselves into battle and stand toe-to-toe with danger, red mages were often referred to as "duelists." The description became so commonplace that it was eventually appended to the name of their traditional vermillion attire.

Murgleis

This masterpiece was the favored weapon of Count Ganelon, a noble swordsman credited with instructing the first red mages in the art of the rapier. Although his conservative kin branded him traitor for sharing their closely guarded techniques, the count's commitment to teaching the blade never wavered.

Red Attire

Prepared for novice red mages by X'rhun Tia himself, this spellcaster's ensemble is designed around the bliaud and gaskins to allow for a full range of movement when fighting with a rapier. X'rhun entrusted the attire's creation to the Weavers' Guild in Ul'dah, and its members still tell of how the guildmaster cost them any semblance of a profit by remixing the dye over and over until he created a hue of red deep enough to meet his satisfaction.



Guespiere

Named after the old Elezen word for "wasp," this blade was forged by the Ishgardian forefathers following their colonization of Coerthas. When the red mages were still experimenting with mundane fighting styles to supplement their sparing use of aether, an Elezen who had taken refuge in Gyr Abania offered to teach them his race's traditional sword techniques. For two groups that are otherwise unrelated, such historical context readily explains the odd similarity between red mage and olden-day Coerthas weaponry.

Vermillion Scourge

Tricks of the Trade

Vermillion Scourge

The pinnacle of the red mage's art. The practitioner scribes two eldritch circles upon the ground which he then accelerates with an infusion of black and white mana, resulting in a titanic eruption of arcane force.

Moulinet

Meaning "windmill" or "waterwheel," this traditional Elezen technique is so named for its wide, sweeping motions.

Verflare

Its name a portmanteau of "vermillion" and "flare," this incantation seeks to rival the destructive power of the black mage spell that shares the latter's denomination. Rather than draw on ambient aether to cause a single, massive explosion, Verflare overlaps a number of smaller arcane eruptions.

Verholy

An adaptation of the forbidden white mage spell "Holy," this purifying blast was conceived as a means to banish the lingering voidsent which were summoned during the War of the Magi.

Moulinet

Verflare

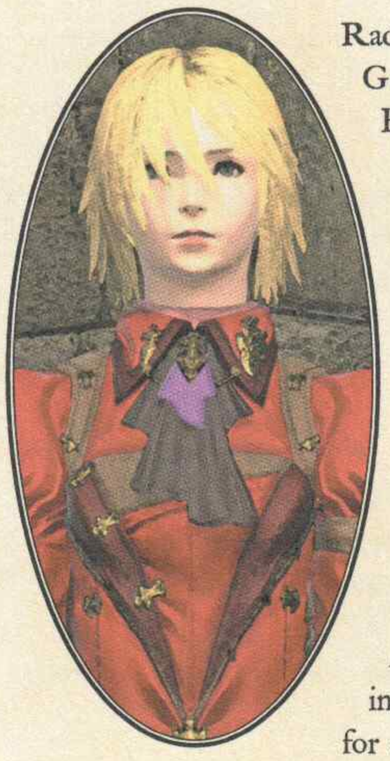
Verholy

X'rhun Tia

Race (Clan): Miqo'te (Seeker of the Sun)
Gender: Male Age: 42
Epithet: Deep Red

X'rhun Tia is the last living member of the Crimson Duelists, a band of red mages active during the Ala Mhigan revolution. Seeking a means to resist the tyranny of the mad king Theodoric, he worked with Lambard and his other sworn brothers to successfully revive the lost art of red magic. Yet even as the revolutionaries claimed victory, their triumph was soured by the imperial invasion, and Lambard's sudden and bloody betrayal. His fellow Duelists slaughtered, the surviving X'rhun chose to leave Gyr Abania and travel the realm alone, a wandering pilgrim lending aid to those in need. Along his journey, he crossed paths with a certain adventurer and a girl named Arya, and would go on to confront the demons of his past.

Arya Gastaurknan



Race (Clan): Hyur (Midlander)
Gender: Female Age: 18
Epithet: The Painter

Kidnapped by a murderous cabal, this young woman was rescued from her fate by X'rhun Tia and his adventurer apprentice. The ordeal had cost Arya much of her memory, but unwilling to remain a burden to her saviors, she expressed a desire to learn the empowering art of red magic. During her time under X'rhun's tutelage, Arya would uncover the astonishing truth of her ancestry—she is a descendant of Archmagus Calowise, a Mhachi sorcerer who infused himself with voidsent blood in exchange for supernatural power. With the heritage of the "Nightkin" flowing in her veins, Arya found herself marked by the gaze of the voidsent queen, Lilith.

Nightkin

The Nightkin is the name given to those descended from the archmagus who infused himself with the blood of the voidsent queen, Lilith. In exchange for granting immense sorcerous power, the tainted blood demands that Nightkin feed on mortal aether to survive. The corruption is also tied to Lilith's presence in the material realm—should she return to the void, then its potency will fade.

Lilith

Lilith is a fiend of highest rank, summoned from the void by the Mhachi archmagus, Calowise. Calowise forged a pact with the voidsent queen to secure her blood, but at the culmination of the ritual he betrayed Lilith, sealing her within a warded sarcophagus. For a thousand years has she schemed from her prison, manipulating events to provide her with the perfect vessel for her return.

Lilith

SAMURAI

On the island nation of Hingashi, the realm's great lords vied for supremacy over a long and bloody conflict. And taking to battle in their lieges' names were noble swordsmen whose art was forged in the crucible of war: the samurai. Eventually, the nation was unified under one banner, and these warriors came to wield their katana as protectors of their homeland's peace.

History

Primarily, "samurai" refers to a position of standing in Hingashi society—a martial vassal who serves his liege in return for certain privileges. The word itself derives from the root "saburau" meaning "to serve," which reinforces the fundamental nature of their status. Records of this arrangement became common some six hundred years ago, but examples of the samurai art of combat can be found even earlier in history.

The fighting style—distinct from mainland practices—was founded by warriors who favored the katana, and honed over lifetimes of conflict. As well as devising techniques to infuse their uniquely curved blades with "Kenki," samurai also mastered the meditative state of "Sen," which paved the way for "Iaijutsu" and other elevated forms of swordsmanship. The samurai arts eventually found purchase on the continent, and saw the birth of numerous variant schools. In a realm coddled by relative peace, however, the title of samurai has become largely hereditary, leading to fears that this once hard-earned honor is being replaced by empty tradition.

Equipment

Myochin Armor

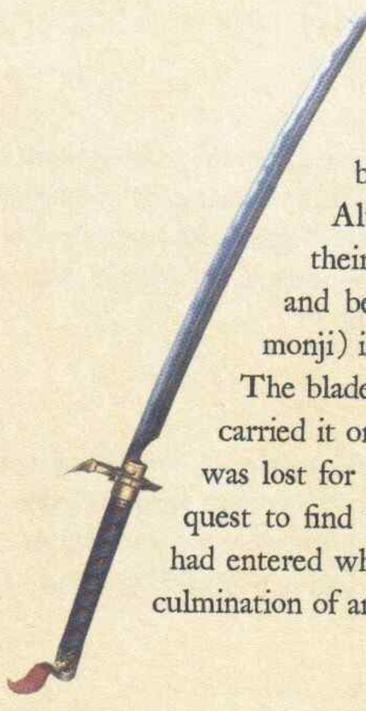
Crafted in the haori-and-hakama style by armorers of the longstanding Myochin clan, this set of armor is common garb for present-day samurai. Whilst it appears little more than a decorative kimono, the cloth is woven in such a way as to promote the flow of aether.

Kiku-ichimonji

Kiku-ichimonji was forged by a legendary Hingan swordsmith, the proof of which can be found in the engraved signature—the character for "ichi" or "one." The sword features a broad point, and an elegant, undulating temper pattern along the length of the blade, whilst the sheath's serpentine ornamentation amplifies the wielder's energies when performing Iaijutsu.

Nameless Armor

This most elementary set of armor was designed for samurai initiates. The togi and hakama are both woven with enchanted silk to enhance the wearer's sensitivity to the flow of aether, effectively aiding the novice in learning to recognize the sensation of Kenki gathering in blade and sheath. Dyed entirely in black, the color of the attire mutes any lurid splashes of blood—either from the enemy, or the wearer himself—to help stave off panic in the inexperienced once the rush of battle has faded.



Katayama

This masterpiece was forged by the Katayama branch of the Ichimonji school of swordsmiths. Although Kiku-ichimonji, a katana crafted by their forebears, is considered superior in sharpness and beauty, Katayama (or in full, Katayama-ichimonji) is still celebrated for its exquisite workmanship. The blade changed hands many times, until one wielder carried it on a warrior's pilgrimage to the west, where it was lost for long years. It was later discovered that in his quest to find worthy opponents, the overconfident samurai had entered where no man should tread, and perished at the culmination of an epic battle.

Doom of the Living

Tricks of the Trade

Doom of the Living

All those who live are fated to die. The samurai portrays the foe's life with innumerable slashes of the blade, ends that life with a single, aether-infused stroke, and then sheathes her weapon in a symbolic depiction of transience.

Hissatsu: Kyuten

One of the samurai's formidable Hissatsu techniques, Kyuten is a word which expresses nine directions—the eight compass points joined by the center. Devised to cut down all surrounding enemies with a single strike.

Tenka Goken

A form of Iaijutsu wherein the samurai fashions his katana's accumulated aether into phantom blades, and strikes as if wielding the five swords of legend—the Tenka Goken.

Midare Setsugekka

Setsu. Getsu. Ka. It is said when one occupies all three states of Sen, the thread of a foe's life comes into focus. This sublime Iaijutsu was devised to cut that thread.

Hissatsu: Kyuten

Tenka Goken

Midare Setsugekka

Musosai

Race (Clan): Hyur (Far Eastern)
Gender: Male Age: 78
Epithet: None

A master swordsman hailing from Hingashi, Musosai traveled to Eorzea in search of a pupil to carry on the fighting techniques he had spent a lifetime perfecting. To that end, Musosai employed the aid of Momozigo, an Ul'dahn showmaster, to organize a tournament in the Coliseum. It was later revealed that Musosai was the one known as "Kogarashi," a noble samurai who righted wrongs across Hingashi, a man nevertheless forced to abandon his homeland following the evils perpetrated by Ugetsu, his former student. Racing against illness and the march of old age, Musosai had departed for foreign shores to seek a worthy successor to his legacy.

Ugetsu Tachikake

Race (Clan): Hyur (Far Eastern)
Gender: Male Age: 31
Epithet: Slayer of a Thousand Souls

A talented swordsman, and leader of an insurgent group. Alongside his teacher, Master Musosai, a young Ugetsu embarked on a pilgrimage to confront injustice across Hingashi, but was instead incensed by the corruption he witnessed strangling his homeland. Reasoning that those in power had grown greedy and complacent over long years of peace, Ugetsu vowed to bring down the bakufu in fire and blood. He gathered a band of like-minded fellows, and began executing dignitary after dignitary in a string of assassinations. His philosophy of cutting out the old to make way for the new earned him few allies, however, and his methods became ever more extreme. A confrontation with the Sekiseigumi saw him slay Captain Kongo, but Ugetsu finally met his end at the hands of a fellow pupil of Musosai, aided by Makoto—a Sekiseigumi samurai who was, in truth, his own sister, Kagetsu.

Kenki

In the lands of the Far East, one's aetheric flow is often referred to as "ki." The Kenki of the samurai is a harnessing of these energies, allowing the swordsmen to accumulate ki within their blades and thence unleash various deadly techniques. In this respect, such "Hissatsu" might be interpreted as a martial form of magecraft.

Iaijutsu

These techniques are performed by building aether in a sheathed katana, and then unleashing the entire store of energy the instant the blade is drawn. Executing Iaijutsu correctly requires complete control over one's state of mind—a feat achieved by entering a battle trance known as "Sen." Samurai attain such meditative mastery only through intense discipline and training.

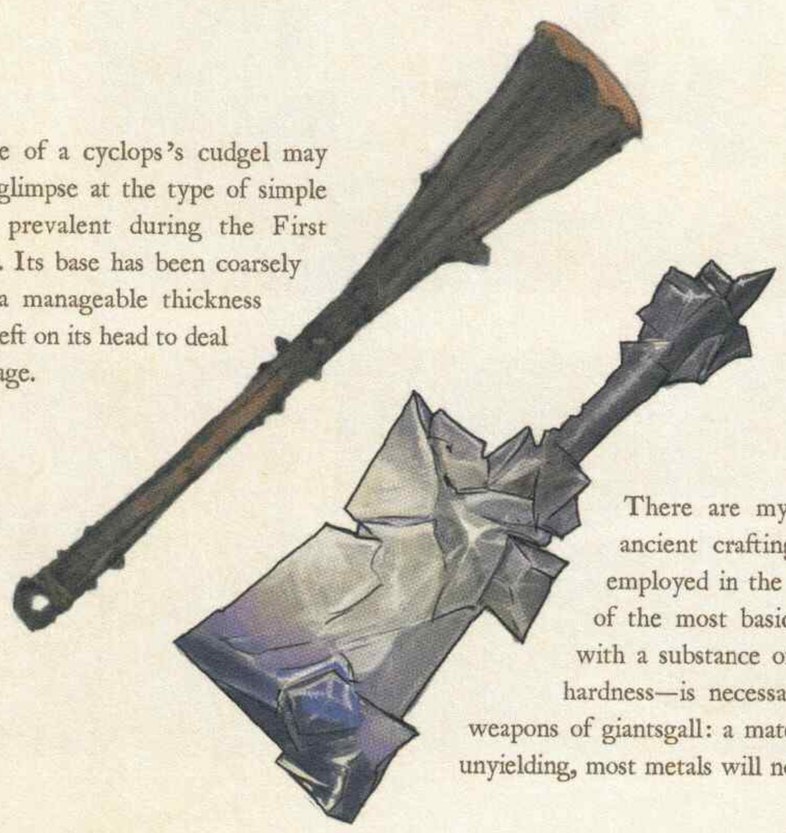
Iaijutsu

WEAPONS ACROSS HYDAELYN

It is said a civilization can be defined by the wars fought to found it. It is also said that no war can be won without proper weapons. It is thus that we must look to these tools of unmaking to learn of how mankind was able to rise from the dark and create the foundations upon which it now thrives.

Animal No Longer

Man would be no different than wolf or bear were he unable to take up in his hands Hydaelyn's bounty and bend it unto his will. In this sense, Nature served our primitive ancestors well, providing stones to hurl and boughs to brandish—objects that would prove to be the origins of modern weaponry. From these humble beginnings did instruments of war slowly evolve—rocks were sharpened into crude knives to cut branches, branches whittled into bows and spears, spears fitted with the knives used to carve them to create picks and hatchets, hatchets used to fell timber for catapults and battering rams. With the proper tools in hand, mankind's only limit was his own ingenuity.



This image of a cyclops's cudgel may provide a glimpse at the type of simple weaponry prevalent during the First Astral Era. Its base has been coarsely lathed to a manageable thickness and knots left on its head to deal added damage.

There are myriad examples of ancient crafting techniques still employed in the modern day. One of the most basic—chiseling stone with a substance of equal or greater hardness—is necessary when creating weapons of giantsgall: a material so dense and unyielding, most metals will not even scratch it.

From Stone to Metal

Shortly before the dawn of the Second Astral Era, mankind was awakened to the secrets of metalcraft, and weapons began to take on entirely different shapes. The first metal weapons, however, were not only difficult to create, but quick to dull and bend. As such, ownership was limited to a select few, and usage predominantly ceremonial. It was not until the discovery of bronze—a durable alloy of copper and lead—that bladed weapons began to gradually replace those of stone.

The Second Astral Era also saw mankind's emergence as manipulators of magic. As his ability to channel aether improved, the elements could now be focused for controlled use. The heat of a forge could be intensified to levels heretofore unattainable. Ore unaltered by flames fueled with wood melted like ice when placed in a mage's inferno—ore such as iron. Yet, despite these advancements, a lack of raw materials severely restrained production, and metal blades would remain a luxury reserved for the privileged—namely the church—until well into the era that followed.

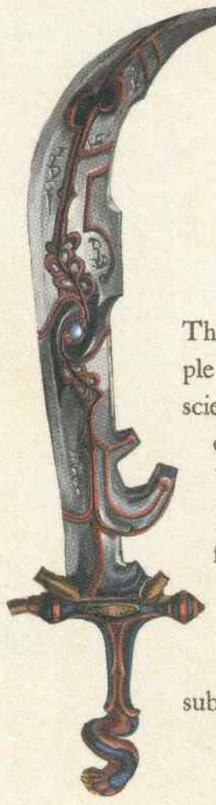
Advancements in metallurgy eventually rendered obsolete the need for elemental assistance. Complex systems of pipes and bellows now provide all the heat a smithy needs to liquefy even the hardest of metals.

Science and Sorcery

With the Third Astral Era came the rise of the Allagan Empire, and it was but a matter of centuries before the nation had conquered most of the Three Great Continents, as well as portions of the New World. However, their true prize was not the land and its resources, nor the people and their labor, but the boundless knowledge of a thousand civilizations—knowledge that could be applied, adapted, and improved upon. It was through conquest abroad that the Allagans could further strengthen their cultural core. Using the lore of those they defeated, imperial scholars devised a means of imbuing inorganic materials such as stone or metal with powerful magicks, not only strengthening the materials, but providing them with the inherent latent attributes of the elements applied. This breakthrough would eventually lead to the rise of aetherochemistry—a new scientific field that inspired the creation of myriad wonders far beyond the capacity of Nature's limited reach. Indestructible metals, impossibly thin fibers, and chimerical creations were no longer the stuff of faerie tales.

And thus did the Allagans maintain their dominion over much of Hydaelyn for more than a thousand summers. Yet, for all their accomplishments, there remained one feat they could not master—the ebb and flow of astral and umbral—and it was their inability to forestall the coming calamity that would eventually spell their downfall, and see the secrets of their creations lost forever.

By the Third Astral Era, the enchanting of weapons had become common practice. The intricate webbing of geometric patterns serves to guide aether along the blade, enhancing keenness of edge.

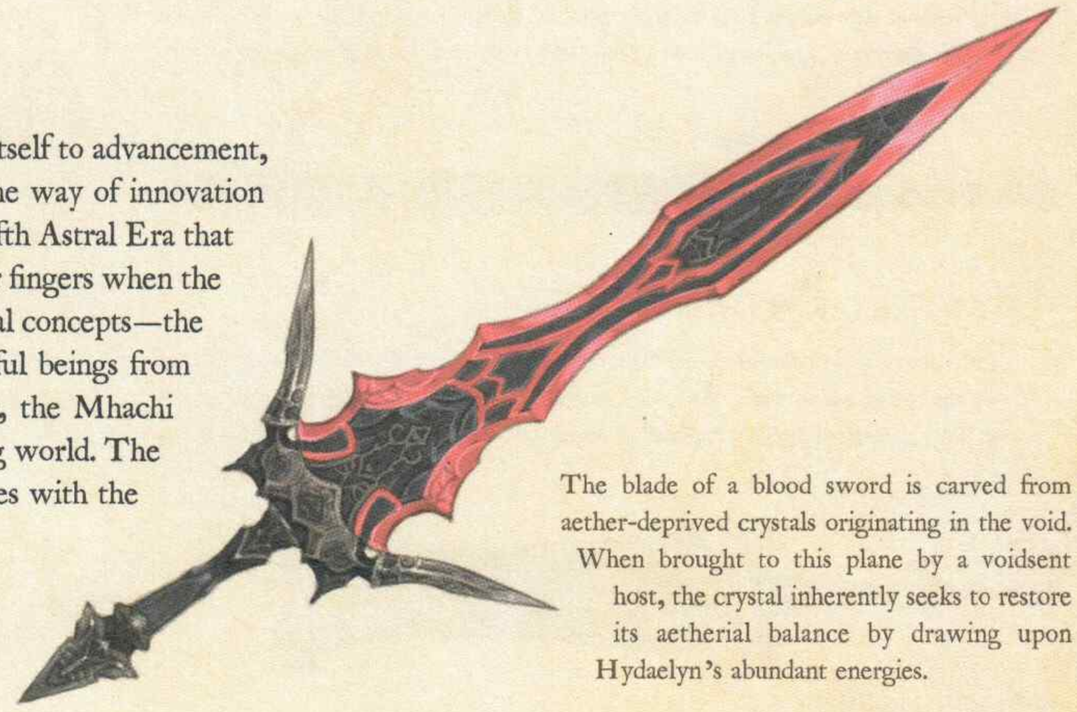


The Dimension Blade is an example of Allagan ingenuity, blending science and sorcery for the purpose of clean, efficient destruction. Within the weapon's data banks are stored the commands for casting controlled bursts of dimensional magicks, which cause localized spatial displacement capable of rending substances of any hardness.

According to Allagan documentation, this sharply angled sword is made of orichalcum—an ultra-hard metal seemingly nonexistent on Hydaelyn outside samples discovered in Azys Lla. As with most imperial blades, serpentine patterning has been employed to improve aetherial conductivity.

The Dark Cuts

As one might expect, an age in which learning is shunned does not lend itself to advancement, and so it was that the Fourth Astral Era came and went with little in the way of innovation regarding weaponry...or much else, for that matter. It was not until the Fifth Astral Era that mankind began rediscovering the knowledge that had slipped through their fingers when the Allagan Empire fell. Yet ultimately, the period is best defined by its original concepts—the most impactive being the voidmagicks of Mhach. By summoning powerful beings from the void and binding them into service by means of arcane blood pacts, the Mhachi were able to wrest from their captives the forbidden knowledge of a dying world. The knowledge would eventually see the nation prosper by providing its armies with the means to swiftly and efficiently vanquish their enemies.



The blade of a blood sword is carved from aether-deprived crystals originating in the void. When brought to this plane by a voidsent host, the crystal inherently seeks to restore its aetherial balance by drawing upon Hydaelyn's abundant energies.

A Call to Order

Quite possibly the most significant advancement in weaponcraft came in the Sixth Astral Era with the pioneering of crystal-based synthesis. The ability to replicate the extreme heat of a forge or the acidic properties of a rare dissolvent simply by releasing the concentrated energy of an aetherial crystal made crafting accessible to the masses and once again opened the door for innovation in weapon design. Guilds were flooded with fledgling Disciples of the Hand, all seeking to learn how they, too, might forge the next legendary bow or blade.

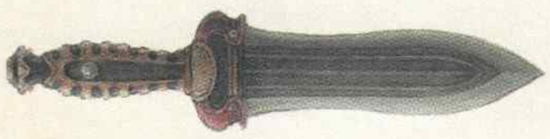
Compact crystal forges allow individual Disciples of the Hand the capacity to tackle complex tasks formerly reserved for private facilities. No longer are massive distillation towers necessary to extract the essential oils from a lotus, nor guild foundries necessary to temper mythril.

THE ONE-HANDED SWORD

Before mankind's eventual mastery of metal in the waning years of the First Astral Era, crude blades of chipped stone, flint, and obsidian served as the sole means for separating fur from flesh and flesh from bone. When man realized that these tools could be turned to weapons to grant him dominion over his neighbor, their shape began to change. The blades grew longer, crossguards were added to protect the wielders' hands, hilts were wrapped in leather to improve grip. But it was not until the advent of bronze that what we know today as "swords" truly came to be. Since then, six Astral Eras have seen simple utility evolve into the all-purpose functionality found in modern-day blades.

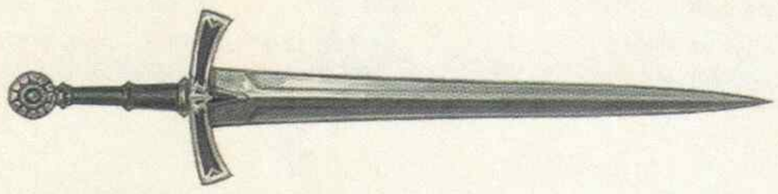
There are almost as many types of swords as there are men and women who brandish them. To distinguish a common sword from a dagger or a claymore, a clear-cut definition is required. Gladiators' Guild doctrine mandates that to be categorized as a one-handed sword, the weapon's blade must "be of a score or more ilms," and its weight should "be as such that a Hyuran adult might bear it with little burden." As for the manner in which one might wield that blade, there are no such restrictions, and as such, countless schools of swordplay can be found across the Three Great Continents, from the flamboyant style taught in Ul'dah's gladiatorial ludi, to the defensive parries passed down to the paladins of the Sultansworn; from the traditional Elezen methodology chosen by Ishgard's holy knights, to the fluid battledance employed by the exotic Hingan samurai.

Prominent Designs



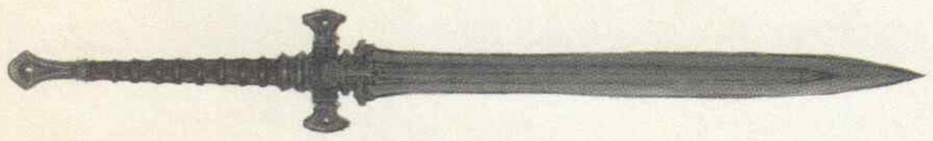
Spatha

Once a blade commonly worn by chocobo cavalry, it has since fallen into disuse, save amongst gladiators who oft purposefully choose weapons of past eras to beguile Coliseum spectators.



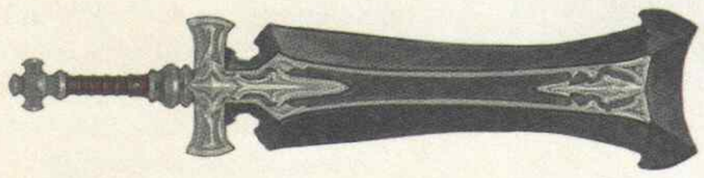
Viking Sword

For centuries have the Sea Wolves of the Northern Empty carried these impressive weapons into battle, be it on land or on sea. While its twin edges are not known for their sharpness, the long, heavy blade serves more to bludgeon than to sever.



Bastard Sword

The bastard sword combines the balance and wieldability of a single-handed sword with the weight and reach of a two-handed blade, creating a weapon that, while excelling in none of these weapons' traits, offers opportunities afforded by neither.

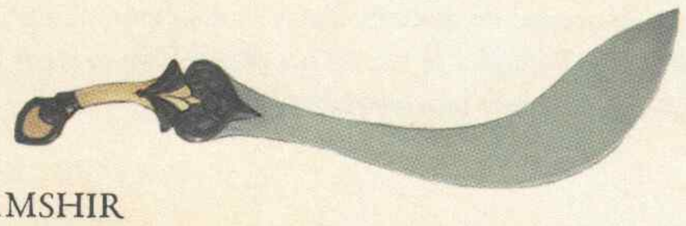


Broadsword

When wielded by one with sufficient strength, the extra weight added by the broadsword's widened blade is transformed from a burden into deadly driving force capable of severing a man from head to groin.

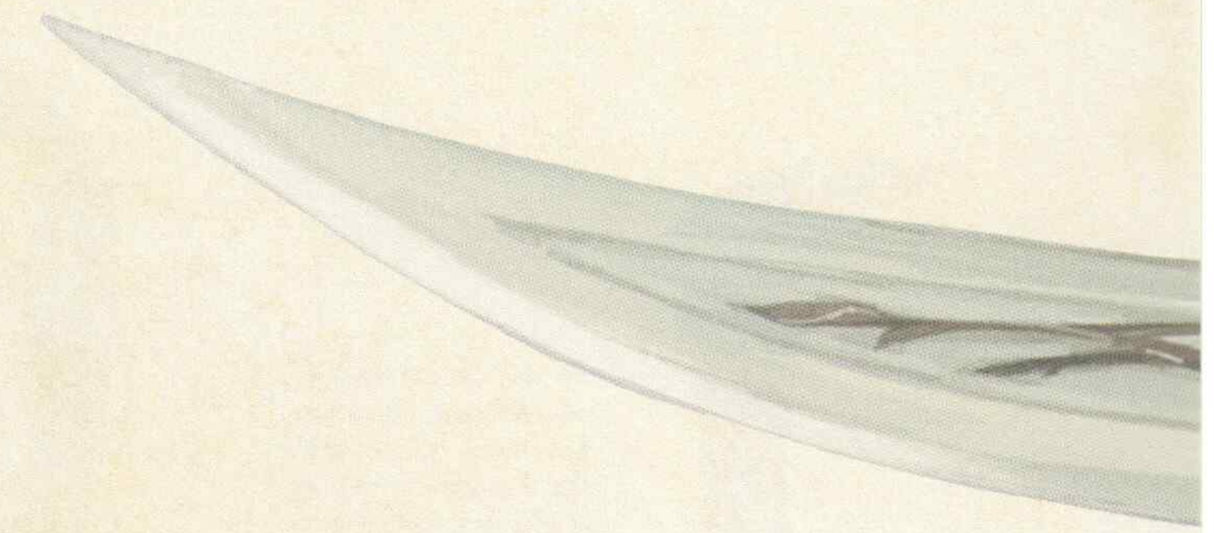
Falchion

Absent from Eorzea's shores for centuries, this light sword made its return to the realm with the Hyur tribes during the middle Sixth Astral Era. Its curved blade allows for an extended edge, making it useful not only in battle, but also for clearing thick frontier undergrowth.



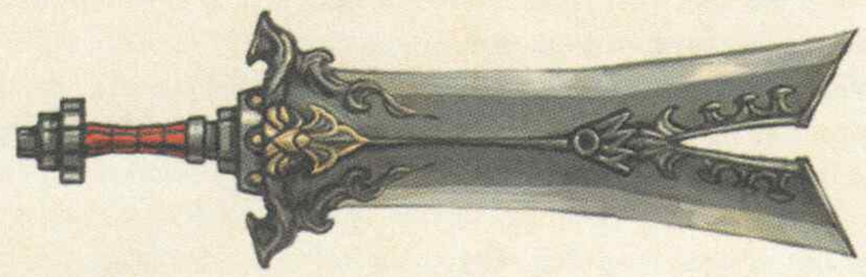
Shamshir

A traditional curved blade of Near Eastern design. Countless of these deadly weapons are believed to have passed into the hands of the Ixal near the end of the Sixth Astral Era after the tribe's contact with goblin traders.



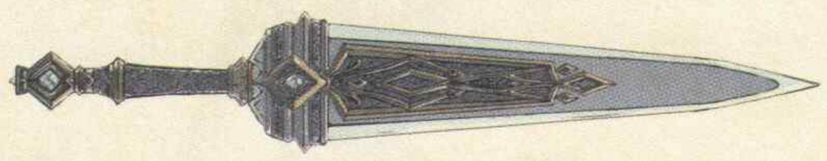
Break Blade

Relic of an age when little thought was put into the naming of weapons, the Break Blade was unearthed by the Sons of Saint Coinach at one of their many dig sites in Mor Dhona. Though discovered buried amongst other items of Allagan design, later research into the stone blade revealed it to be a spoil of war obtained in the subjugation of a people known as the Graeae.



Burtgang

According to its creator, master weaponsmith Gerolt Blackthorn, Burtgang was forged at the behest of one of the Black Shroud's greatest gladiators, Heimir the Simple. The finished blade was not rent atwain as it is today—the cleft a result of a rare lapse of focus during the final round of a Coliseum tourney. That he may never forget this blemish on an otherwise pristine record, Heimir resolved to leave the sword unrepaired.

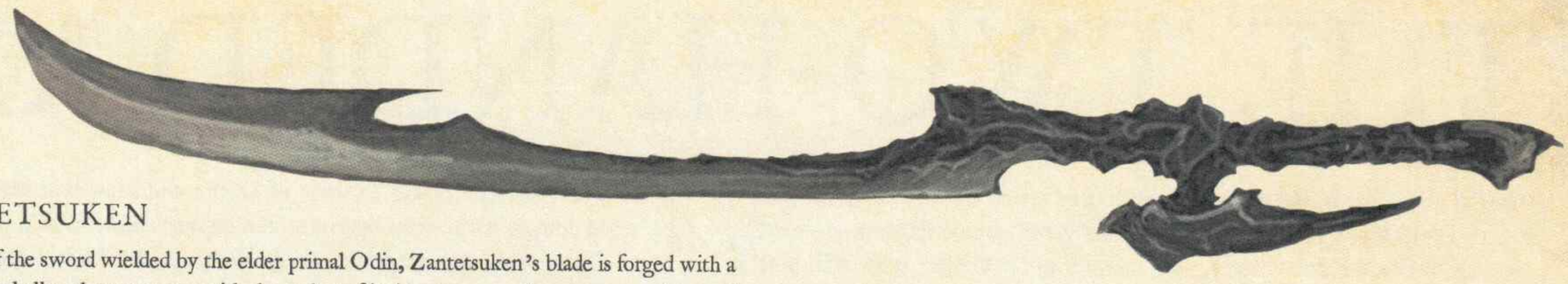


Belah'dian Anelace

The intricate designs gracing the blade's forte were long believed to be simply ornamental. An in-depth analysis of the sword performed by a Sharlayan scholar of ancient weaponry later proved that the markings are runes which, by means unknown, draw aether from the wielder and apply it to the blade's edges, significantly improving sharpness.

Homura

Its name meaning "flame" in the Hingan tongue, the crimson hue of this Far Eastern blade is the product of a unique Garlean alloy recently introduced to Othard. Homura's atypical popularity in Eorzea can be attributed to Rowena's House of Splendors and its shrewd decision to see the extravagant swords exported West.

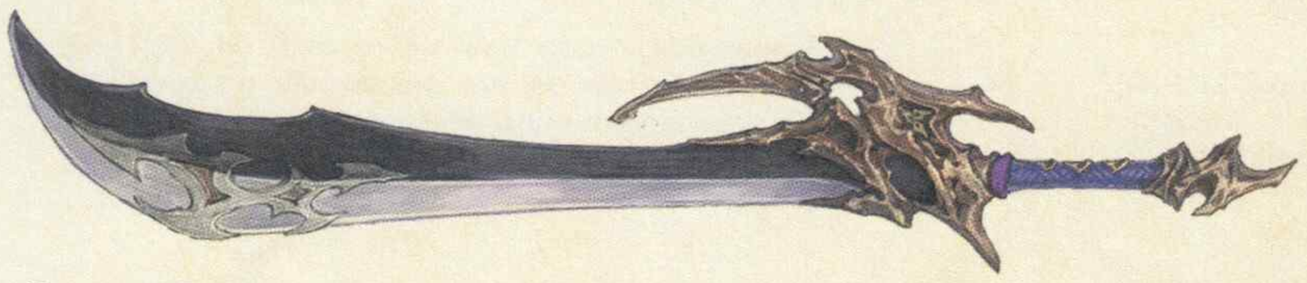


Zantetsuken

Replica of the sword wielded by the elder primal Odin, Zantetsuken's blade is forged with a peculiar metal alloy that resonates with the aether of its bearer, expanding or contracting until optimal balance is achieved. Though versatile, this alloy has the drawback of being lamentably soft, resulting in a blade nowhere near as keen as that of the original.

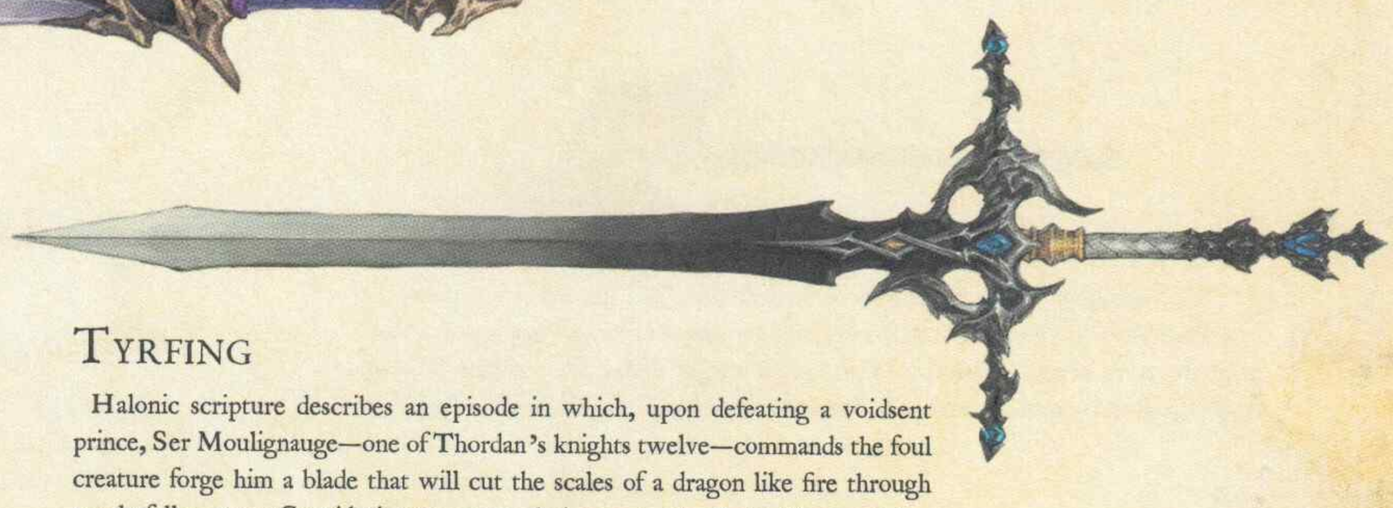
Enhancing Sword

When the King of Ruin commissioned the creation of this lavish sword as a gift to one of two guards charged with protecting the queen, records say the pair were so wrought with jealousy that they challenged each other to a duel that would ultimately spell the end of them both. Upon discovering the magicked weapon in the royal armory following his legion's successful seizure of the capital, the acting Garlean viceroy silently added it to his private collection.



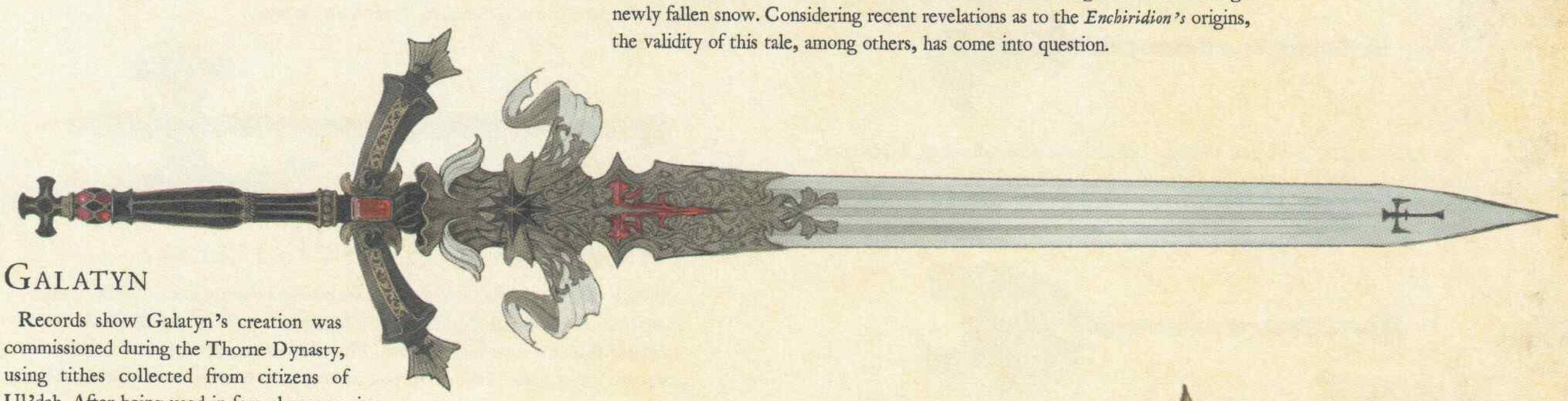
Onikiri

Created by master Doman swordsmith Yasutsuna, and presented as a gift to General Ganen following his historical unification of Yanxia, this curved ashen blade has since filled the scabbard of many a noble warrior. It was not until one used the sword to sever the arm of a great demon, however, that Onikiri earned its name.



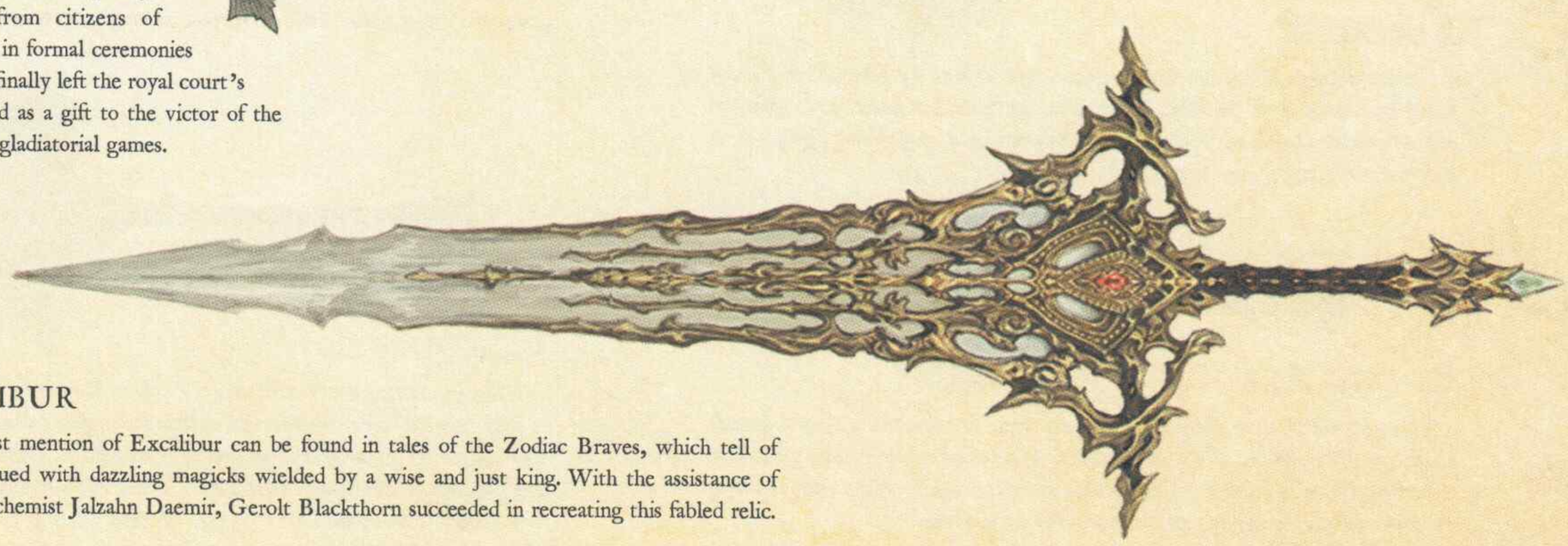
Tyrfing

Halonic scripture describes an episode in which, upon defeating a voidsent prince, Ser Moulignauge—one of Thordan's knights twelve—commands the foul creature forge him a blade that will cut the scales of a dragon like fire through newly fallen snow. Considering recent revelations as to the *Enchiridion's* origins, the validity of this tale, among others, has come into question.



Galatyn

Records show Galatyn's creation was commissioned during the Thorne Dynasty, using tithes collected from citizens of Ul'dah. After being used in formal ceremonies for countless summers, it finally left the royal court's possession when presented as a gift to the victor of the recently revived Ul Cup gladiatorial games.



Excalibur

The earliest mention of Excalibur can be found in tales of the Zodiac Braves, which tell of a sword imbued with dazzling magicks wielded by a wise and just king. With the assistance of renowned alchemist Jalzahn Daemir, Gerolt Blackthorn succeeded in recreating this fabled relic.

THE TWO-HANDED AXE

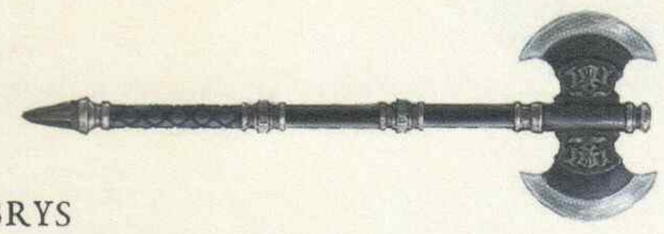
Just as with swords, the history of axes can be traced back to the dawn of early civilization. Axes of flint and polished stone were used to fell forests—clearing the land for farms and villages, and providing the lumber with which those settlements would be constructed. Axe-like blades were outfitted to tools that would till the earth and carve stone from the mountains. Over the centuries, the size and shape of these items would slowly be adapted to their specific tasks—the haft and head of a hatchet growing smaller so as to allow for the swifter hewing of logs, the bit of a pickaxe growing pointed that it might better carve mineral from the wall of a mine. And then came the battleaxe, though it was not until stone blades gave way to those of bronze and brass that the traditional tool of toil completed its transformation into an instrument of death.

The advantages granted by a greataxe on the field of battle are numerous, provided one has the prodigious strength necessary to properly wield the massive weapon. The blade's keen twin edges can be used to tear asunder even the thickest of plate armor, whereas the flat can provide a nigh-indefensible blow to both helm and the head within. A greataxe's value in war, however, need not be limited to the slaying of men. It can also be used as a tool to carve pillars for palisades or siege engines...or make quick work of those raised by the enemy.

Prominent Designs

War Axe

In past ages, rulers fearful of the common man rising up against their power would oft forbid the possession of weapons by all but those conscripted to their armies. Such laws, however, could rarely stand in the way of a man and his freedom, and equipped with naught save the selfsame axe he used to cut his family's firewood would he march on the lords who would see him suffer.



Labrys

Originally a raider's weapon, it was during the mid to late Second Astral Era that, for reasons unknown, the twin-headed labrys became a symbol of the ruling churches, and its use was restricted to sacred religious ceremonies and sacrificial rites.

Bhuj

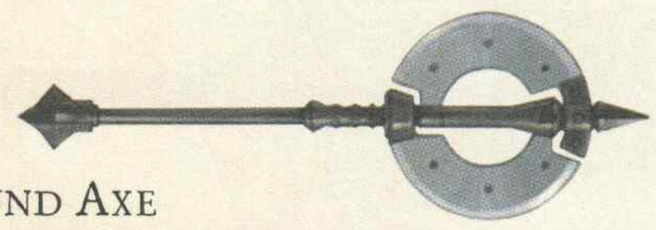
A traditional battleaxe of central-southern Ilsabard and the isle of Thavnair, the curved bhuj first made its way into Eorzea by means of Ala Mhigan trade routes in the early Sixth Astral Era. The head's weight makes for remarkably clean cuts, and as such, has become the favored tool amongst the realm's headsmen.

Bill

By extending the hafts and affixing hooked barbs atop the heads, Gridanian infantry were able to modify their standard-issue battleaxes into weapons which could withstand the traditionally devastating charge of enemy chocobo infantry.

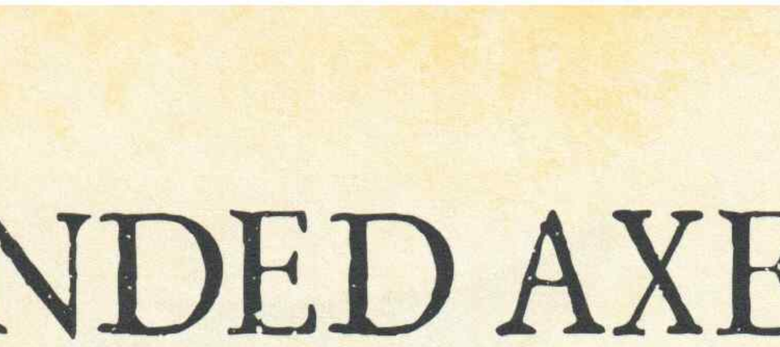
Bardiche

Though records claim the first bardiche was crafted by Ilsabardian Elezen following the dawn of the Sixth Astral Era, the name has since been applied to any two-handed battleaxe with a narrow crescent head, regardless of whether or not they were forged post-great flood.



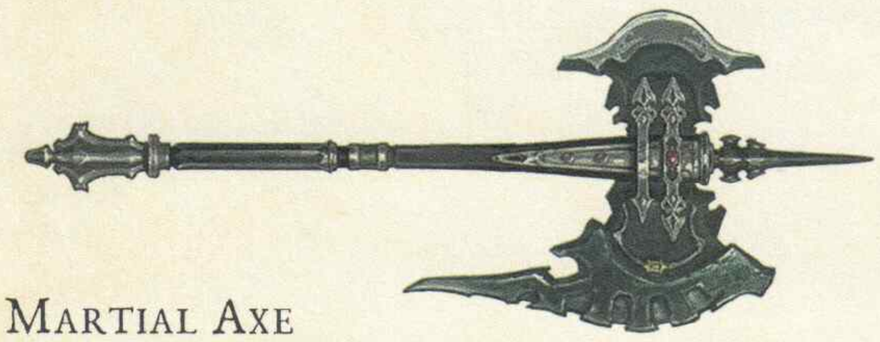
Round Axe

A queer bastardization of the bardiche, the round axe features a hinged circular blade that can be folded down the center. Despite being not particularly effective in battle and highly prone to rust, for many summers such weapons were in vogue amongst self-proclaimed heroes and would-be adventurers.



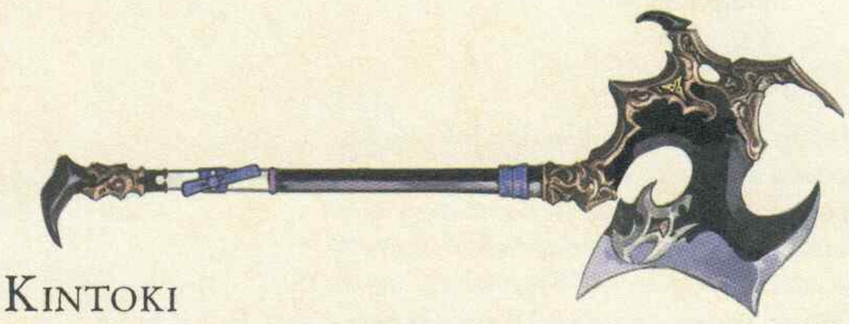
Storm Officer's Labrys

Designed for use by middle- to high-ranking officers within the Maelstrom of Limsa Lominsa, the labrys's anchor-like blade not only provides for maximum carnage in close-combat situations, it can also be used to hook onto a ship's wales when boarding an enemy vessel.



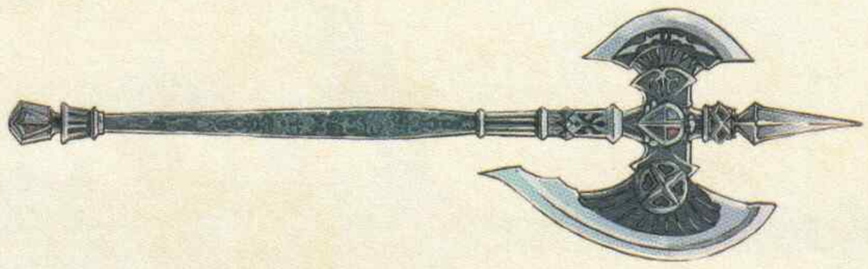
Martial Axe

While a thousand years of conflict 'twixt man and dragon saw design in the majority of Ishgard's weaponry shift from short and bulky to long and light, there still exist some stout blades such as the martial axe to deal with matters less draconic—namely heretics whose transformation into scalebound horrors can only be prevented by swift and clean decapitation.



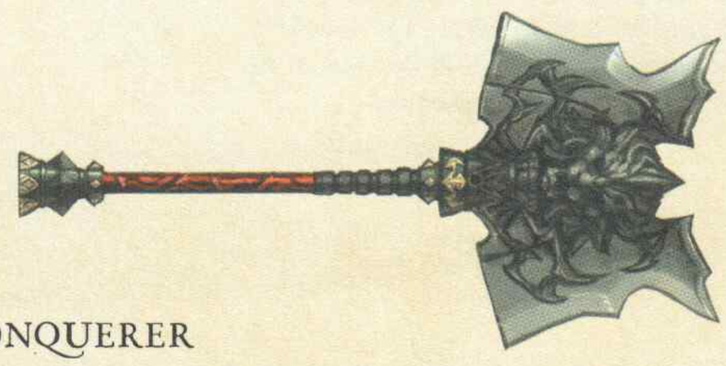
Kintoki

Named for the Doman youth who wielded the axe until his untimely death at the age of but seventeen summers, Kintoki was not originally crafted for use in battle, but to fell timber. So strong was the young warrior that it is said he needed only one hand to see his enemies cloven clean in two.



Nymian Royal Marine Battleaxe

With a haft longer than the arms of the men and women who wielded it, this weapon of choice for the Nymian Royal Marines of the Fifth Astral Era is more a halberd than it is a conventional axe. The extra reach provided by the extended belly and throat granted the soldiers an exceptional advantage on the battlefield.



Conquerer

When the Marauders' Guild was still run by Lominsan pirates, each year they would "award" the captain who scuttled the most vessels with a dual-edged axe crafted by none other than master weaponsmith Gerolt Blackthorn himself (on account of the local Blacksmiths' Guild outright refusing). This tradition was silently abandoned following the Seventh Umbral Era and the subsequent restructuring of many of the city-state's guilds.

Farsha

Handed down through countless generations, this axe has spent most of its existence in the hands of fierce warriors hailing from a Hellsguard village hidden deep in Abalathia's Spine. One of Farsha's more distinctive characteristics is the ability to remove and replace its head, should the bit become dulled in the heat of battle—a common occurrence when wielded by one whose inner beast has been unleashed.

Ukonvasara

A marriage of Gerolt Blackthorn's skill and Ardashir Balyk's ingenuity, Ukonvasara is a prototype of one of the pair's famed "anima weapons." Having achieved cognitive self-awareness, the axe will pulse with an aetherial light synchronized to the wielder's battle-heightened humours.

Dual Haken

One of many relics of the Third Astral Era's Allagan Empire discovered beneath the shores of Silvertear Lake by the Sons of Saint Coinach. The stone used to craft this greataxe's twisted head appears to be giantsgall—a rare material found only on the Near Eastern isle of Thavnair—substantiating the extent of the ancient empire's reach.

Ragnarok

If the legends are to be believed, one of the mighty Zodiac Braves tore this terrible instrument of death and destruction from the icy grip of a slain voidsent lord; yet when he did, it still bore the form of a greatsword. It was not until many moons of carnage in the hands of the hero that Ragnarok completed the metamorphosis into its current shape.

Sparth

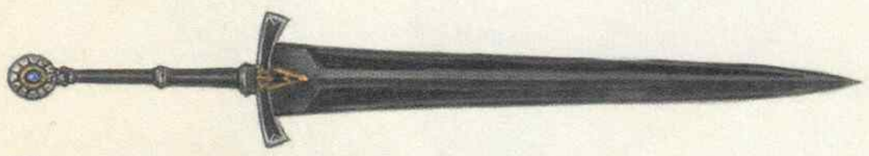
In a rare moment of generosity, mad king Theodoric rewarded his overworked court executioner with this expertly crafted headsman's axe. So beautiful was the blade that the carnifex could not bring himself to dull its bit on the sinewy necks of the convicted. Mistaking this as a slight on his person, Theodoric flew into a fit of rage and ordered the immediate beheading of the stubborn servant.

THE TWO-HANDED SWORD

In battle, maintaining a safe distance from an opponent can oft prove as effective a defense as any suit of mail. Thusly, it would stand to reason that the longer a blade one wielded, the better chance he had at emerging from an encounter victorious. For centuries, however, this theory remained little more than a dream...though not for lack of trying. Countless attempts were made to forge a greatsword that would prove practical in battle; yet, a lack of viable smithing techniques saw most of these endeavors end in failure. Lengthening the blade rendered the metal brittle. Thickening the blade saw it grow too heavy to swing with any speed. It would not be until the Third Astral Era and the rapid advancement of metallurgy under the Allagan Empire that the capability to create a truly viable two-handed option arose.

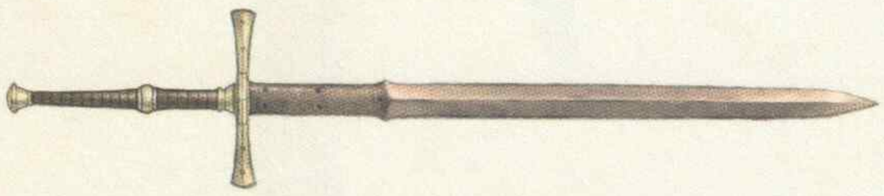
Even then, throughout much of history and well into the Sixth Astral Era, greatswords never gained widespread popularity, the cumbersome weapons being spurned by all save a handful of intrepid individuals. It was not until the age of strife that this finally began to change. Hellsguard mercenaries hired to stave off Ala Mhigo's incursions into the Black Shroud abandoned their traditional broadswords for long, two-handed blades that could counter the pikes of the highland kingdom's infantry. At the same time, a fledgling order of Ishgardian knights also embraced the greatsword, the shieldless style of self-sacrificial swordplay it dictated sitting well with their unique doctrine. It is with these small steps that the two-handed sword slowly came to be accepted in Eorzea and beyond.

Prominent Designs



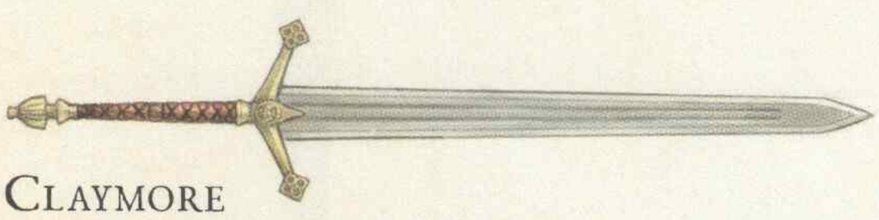
Greatsword

All two-handed swords are technically greatswords, the name generally calling to mind those weapons featuring single, double-edged blades thick at the forte and tapered at the point.



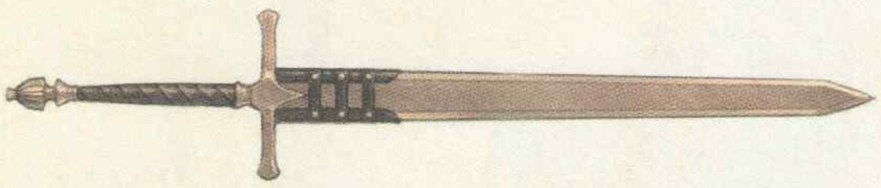
Zweihander

At the base of the zweihander's blade where the forte meets the quillon, there is an edgeless portion known as the ricasso that can be grasped in much the same manner as the grip, allowing for increased control. This quality increases the weapon's appeal amongst the realm's larger-handed races.



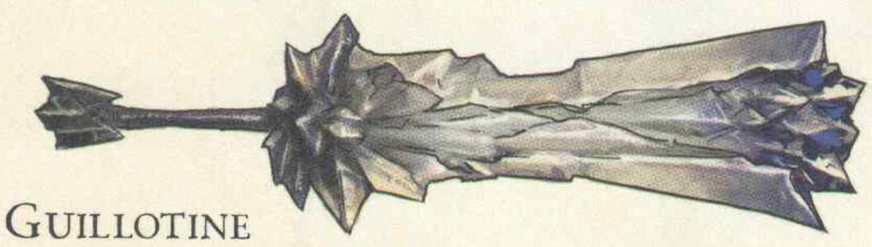
Claymore

Preferred weapon of the Highlander Hyur, the claymore is in many ways similar to the zweihander; however, to accommodate the clan's smaller stature without sacrificing wieldability, the blade has been shortened almost a hand.



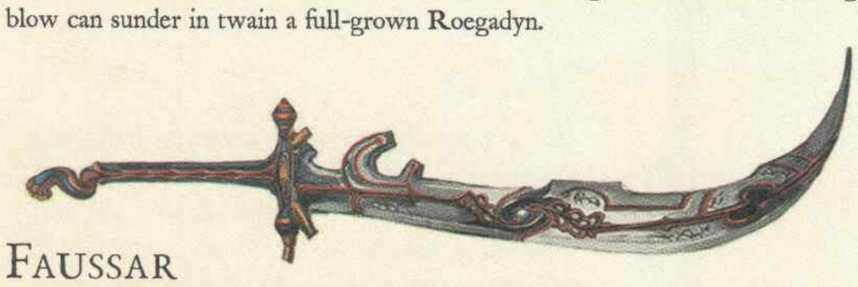
Estramacon

At a glance, one might think the estramacon but another variation on the claymore. What sets the greatswords apart, however, are the thick leather straps wrapped around the lower half of the estramacon's forte. This padding allows the wielder to grip the blade with the off hand, as one would a spear, and apply extra force into a thrust.



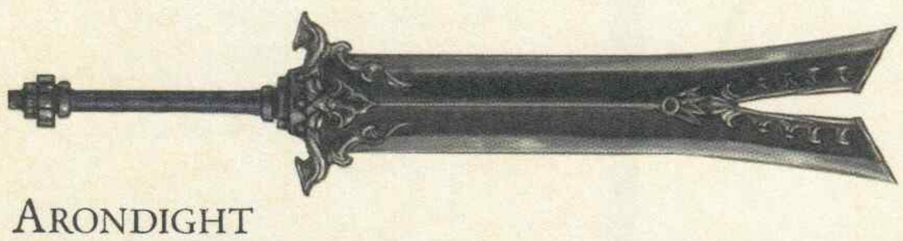
Guillotine

Much like an executioner's axe, the guillotine's true strength lies in the thew of he who carries the sword. It is said that, with enough force behind it, a single blow can sunder in twain a full-grown Roegadyn.



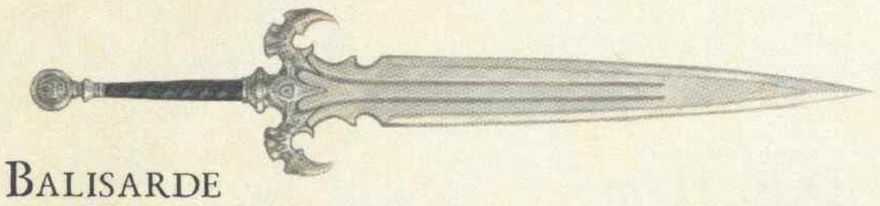
Faussar

Unlike the guillotine, which is designed to sever, the razor-sharp single-edged blade of the faussar is meant to flay its victims with precision cuts. Often regarded as the most elegant of greatswords, many a competent warrior has suffered an untimely end while awestruck by the weapon's beauty.



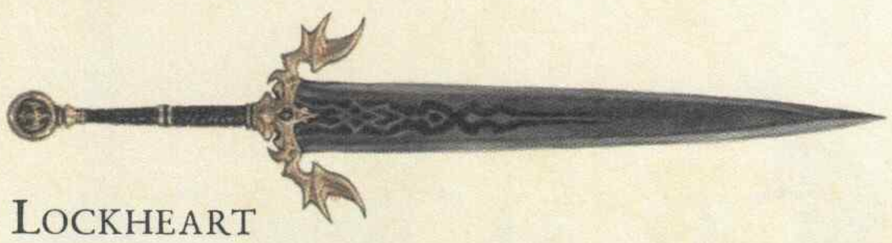
Arondight

Considered one of Gerolt Blackthorn's greatest works, creation of this forked greatsword was commissioned by a high-ranking Ishgardian knight, or so the mastersmith believed until payments for the blade abruptly ceased, and the client mysteriously vanished. Seeking to recuperate his losses, Gerolt finally found a buyer in one of Ul'dah's elite Sultansworn.



Balisarde

There lived a hot-headed young knight who, in a fit of rage, stabbed the archbishop's nephew during an argument over the interpretation of a certain line of Halonic doctrine. Fearing the executioner's blade, he fled Ishgard for the Aurum Vale, where he hid until succumbing to the grot's foul vapors. For his dark deeds that day, Ser Renaut of the White Mountain is a name that will live forever in infamy. His exquisite sword, however, need take none of the blame for its master's misdeeds.

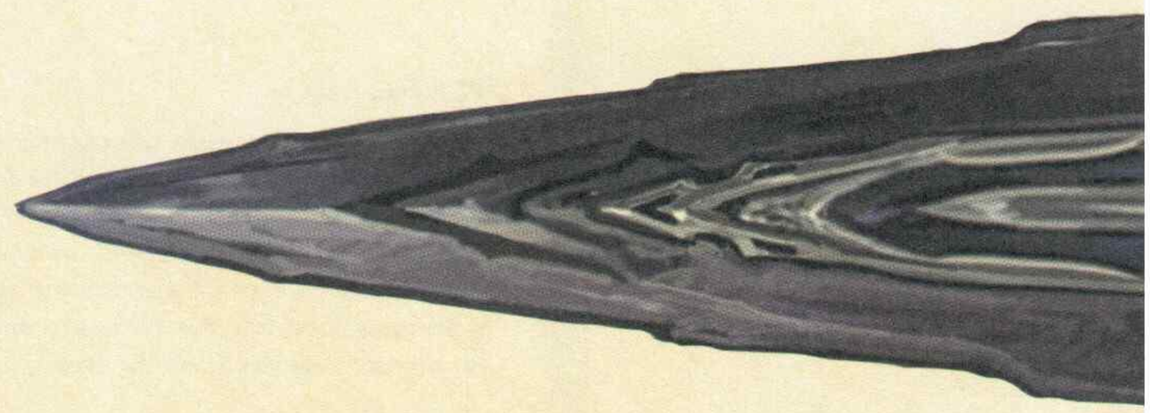


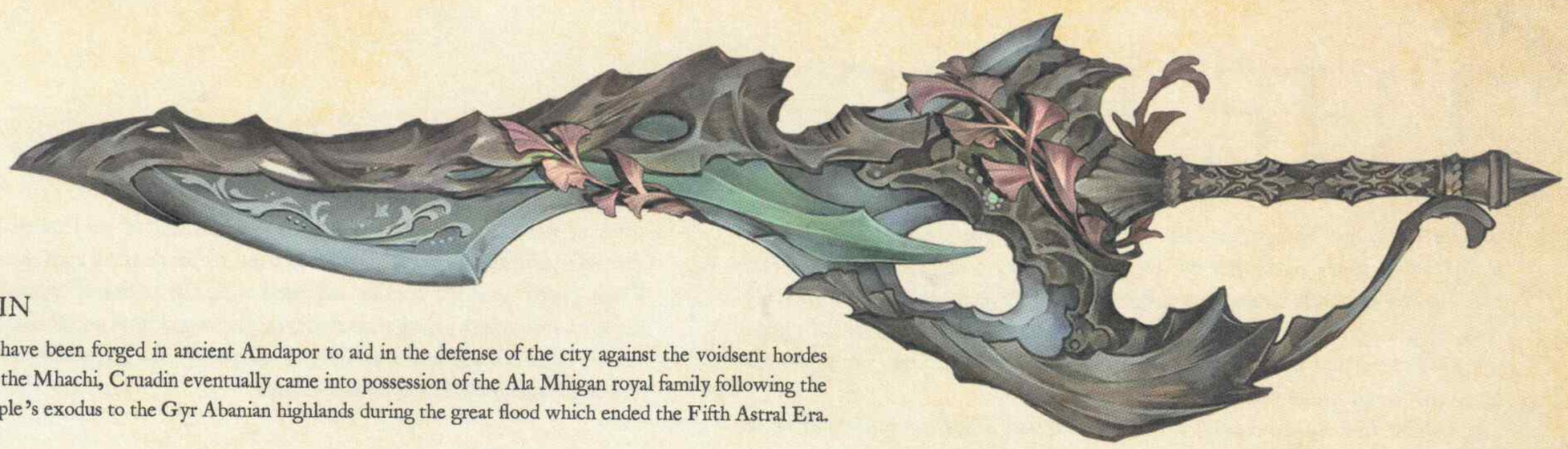
Lockheart

Once the sword of a banneret hailing from a lesser house allied to Haillenarte, it was given the name Lockheart only after its owner perished in an Ishgardian dungeon. The banneret was imprisoned by House Haillenarte for adhering to the teachings of Ser Tryphaniel—also known as the first of the dark knights—choosing rather to waste away in solitude than concede his heart to the demands of another.

Belah'dian Claymore

The Sharlayan archaeologists who discovered this sword in ruins outside Ul'dah were shocked by the amount of dried blood they found caked onto both blade and grip. From this they surmised that the relic had been employed by Belah'dian priests in fell rituals of sacrifice to the goddess of the sun, Azeyma.



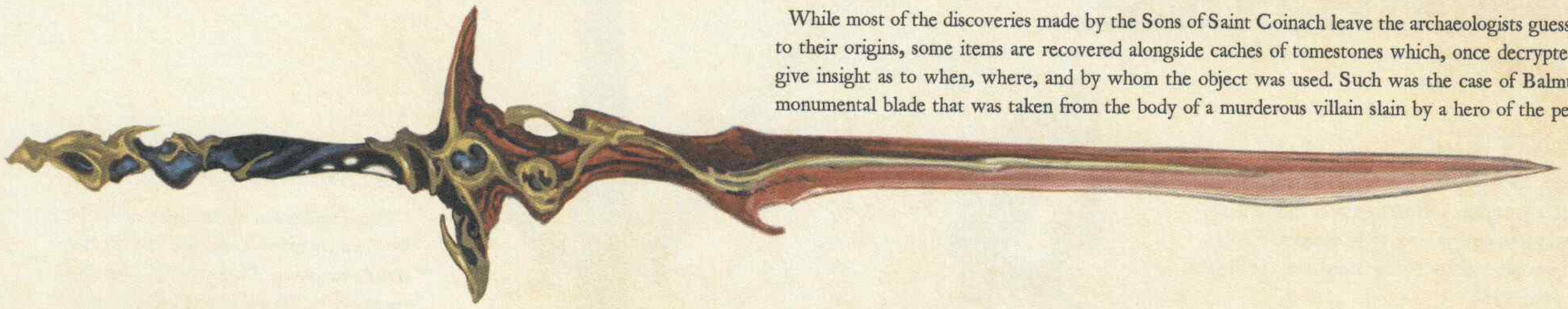


Cruadin

Believed to have been forged in ancient Amdapor to aid in the defense of the city against the voidsent hordes summoned by the Mhachi, Cruadin eventually came into possession of the Ala Mhigan royal family following the Amdapori people's exodus to the Gyr Abanian highlands during the great flood which ended the Fifth Astral Era.

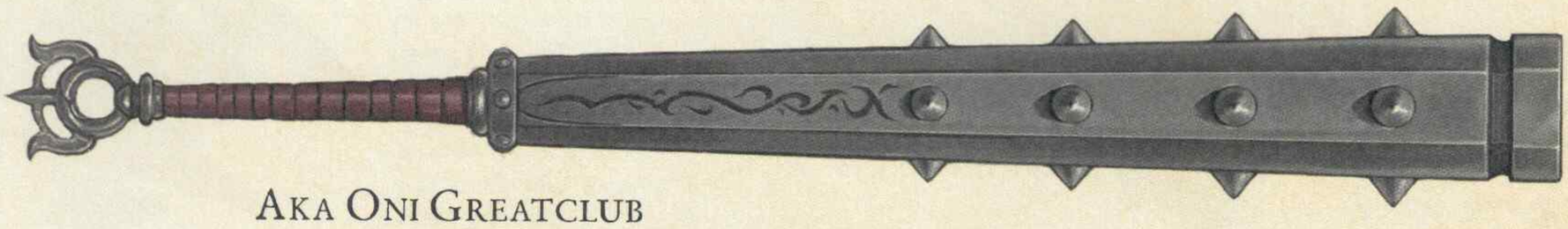
Balmung

While most of the discoveries made by the Sons of Saint Coinach leave the archaeologists guessing as to their origins, some items are recovered alongside caches of tomestones which, once decrypted, can give insight as to when, where, and by whom the object was used. Such was the case of Balmung, a monumental blade that was taken from the body of a murderous villain slain by a hero of the people.



Caladbolg

Upon the defeat of the dark knight Ser Ompagne Deepblack, Sidurgu Orl gathered his former master and caretaker's sword and locked it away in his armoire, vowing he would not remove it until he had proven worthy of the blade. However, a chance meeting with one who Sidurgu found to be his better convinced the knight it belonged in the hands of another.

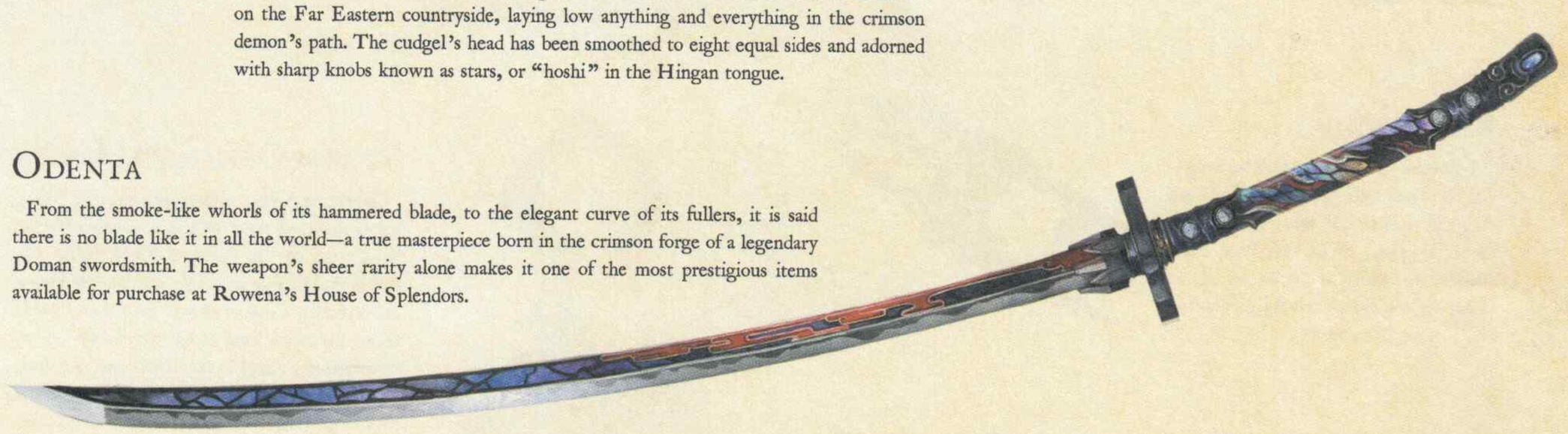


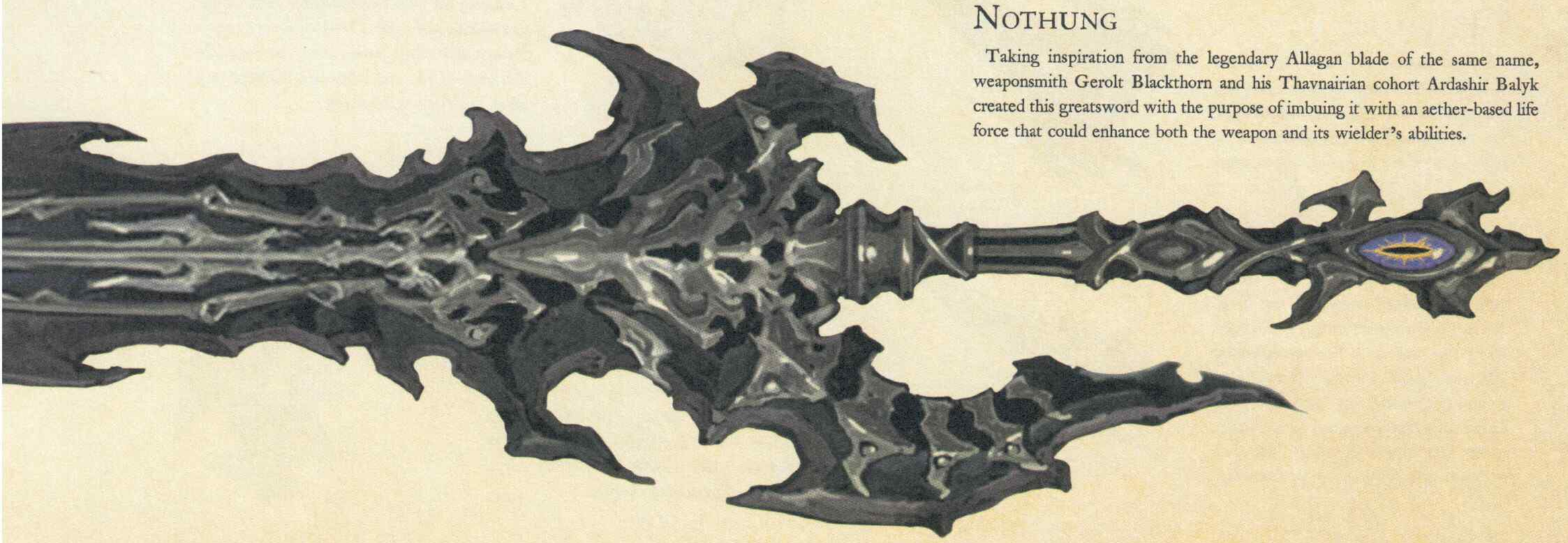
Aka Oni Greatclub

Legend states that with this iron cudgel in hand did the terrible Aka Oni wreak havoc on the Far Eastern countryside, laying low anything and everything in the crimson demon's path. The cudgel's head has been smoothed to eight equal sides and adorned with sharp knobs known as stars, or "hoshi" in the Hingan tongue.

Odenta

From the smoke-like whorls of its hammered blade, to the elegant curve of its fullers, it is said there is no blade like it in all the world—a true masterpiece born in the crimson forge of a legendary Doman swordsmith. The weapon's sheer rarity alone makes it one of the most prestigious items available for purchase at Rowena's House of Splendors.





Nothung

Taking inspiration from the legendary Allagan blade of the same name, weaponsmith Gerolt Blackthorn and his Thavnairian cohort Ardashir Balyk created this greatsword with the purpose of imbuing it with an aether-based life force that could enhance both the weapon and its wielder's abilities.

THE FIST

Many a master of the martial arts would argue that the purest form of combat is that which relies on naught but one's fists. Many a student of the selfsame arts, however, would assert that a broken fist will earn one no victories. As such, pugilists and brawlers have ever sought to protect their weapons of choice from wear and tear by swaddling the more delicate areas—the joints and the knuckles—in all manner of furs, leathers, and cloth.

And while a fist can be deadly, a fist bedecked with studs and spikes can prove deadlier still. It was this notion that saw the rise of supplemental claws and knuckles that could be fastened to a hand to serve as an extension of the fist. From simple wooden handles outfitted with the talons of raptors to ornately decorated gauntlets hiding retractable blades forged from cobalt and adamantium, in every age can one find a panoply of weaponry used to provide the upper hand in a not-so-gentlemanly bout of fisticuffs.

Prominent Designs

Knuckles

By merely adding a layer of metal over one's knuckles, a stunning glance can, at once, become a savage blow. Add sharpened knobs or poisoned spikes to the metal and the blow is now lethal.

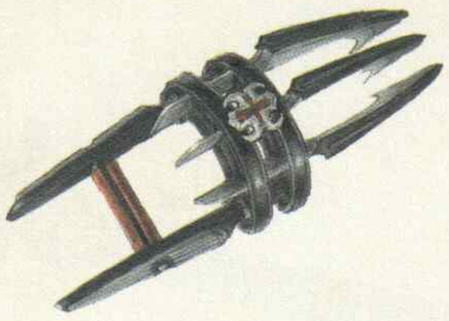
Cesti

In the early days of the Coliseum, pugilists were allowed to wrap their fists with thin strips of leather, protecting them from cuts sustained when striking tooth or bone. Later, the fighters would take to adding grips to prevent slippage, and metal bars beneath the straps to enhance lethality.

Claws

Finding inspiration in the talons of beast and bird, man sought to grant himself the ability to rake and slash. Although blunt force was sacrificed in the process, he created the deadly category of weapons that would come to be known as simply "claws."

Baghnakhs

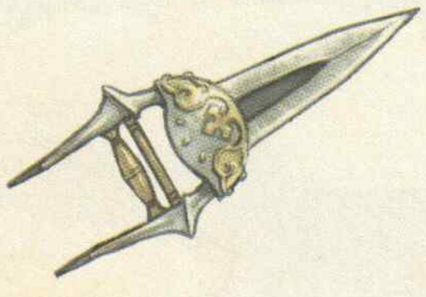


A favored weapon of Amalj'aa brawlers, it is believed that these claws are designed to resemble those of a mighty drake. Pugilists of Ul'dah have since adapted the design of the baghnakhs to better fit the comparatively diminutive hands of the five races.

Jamadhars

To demonstrate their bravery, men and women of Thavnair's warrior caste will don these sword-like extensions of the fist and journey into the mountains to fight wild coeurls in one-on-one combat.

Patas



An Eorzean adaptation of the Near Eastern jamadhars featuring a twin-edged blade fastened to a fist-encompassing spherical guard. Recent advancements in modern metallurgy have seen the once-bulky blade trimmed to a fraction of the width found on earlier models, all without sacrificing potency or durability.

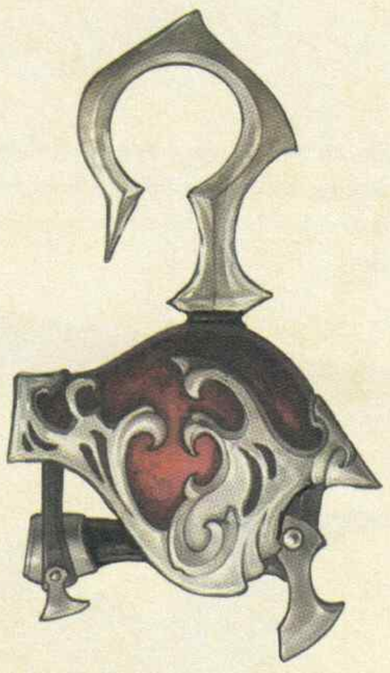
Thavnairian Katars

These traditional blades commonly used by Hannish foot soldiers are not, in fact, actual katars—a Thavnairian word that translates to "short sword"—but jamadhars. The misnomer took root in Eorzea as the result of a mistake made during the Great Gubal Library's transcription of a Near Eastern compendium on weaponry, the curator accidentally misappropriating lines from an entry on jamadhars to the entry on katars.

Glanzfaust

A slave to his many vices, weaponsmith Gerolt Blackthorn will oft frequent fighting pits to partake in a friendly wager or two. It was during one of these visits that he witnessed several bouts featuring a young fistfighter named Dalha—all of which the Roegadyn lost in pitiful fashion. Taking pity upon the boy (after losing several thousand of his own gil), Gerolt gifted him with a custom-made pair of metal knuckles. Three moons later, Dalha had won thirty matches straight and was crowned champion.

Storm Officer's Hooks



Celebrating their pirate heritage, the Maelstrom designed these weapons to resemble the hook used by the infamous Denkyrtrach the Seahawk. His ship seized by means of treachery, Denkyrtrach's captor spared the pirate, instead taking his sword hand and leaving him to die on an unmanned island in the Cieldalaes. Fortune, however, would smile on the grizzled captain and he was soon rescued. Upon his return to Limsa Lominsa, the Seahawk promptly visited a smith and had himself made a hook of silver to replace his lost limb. Two moons later, the hook found the heart of the man who took Denkyrtrach's hand, and the rest is history.

Jikki

Named for the hermit monk who spent more than six and sixty years upon a solitary island in the Ruby Sea perfecting his unique style of hand-to-hand combat, the Jikki are designed to be effective against the slashing blows and swift thrusts of the katana. When tilted at the proper angles, they can deflect even the widest of cuts, leaving the victim open to a devastating counter.

Senju

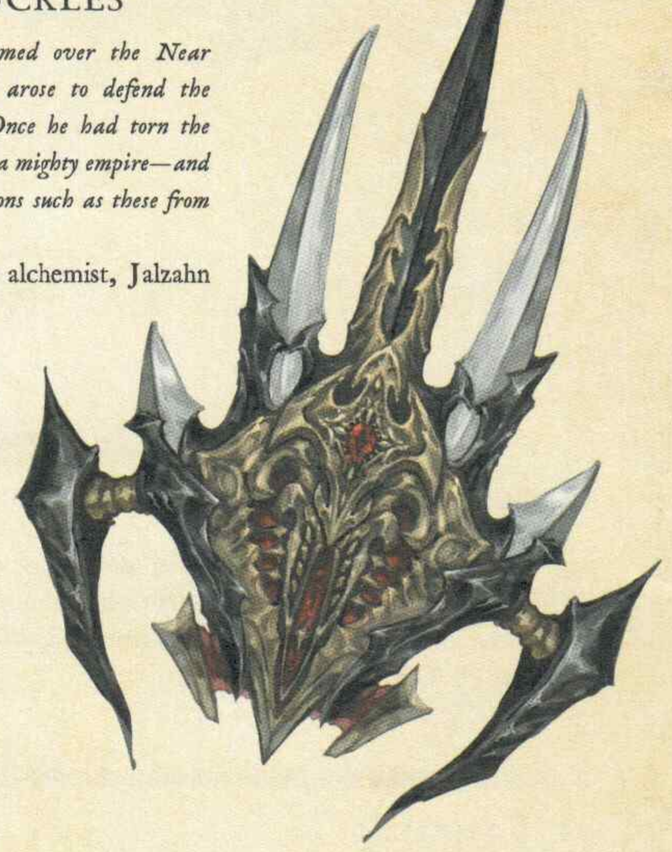
Their name meaning "a thousand hands," these durable claws are not only deadly, but aid their wearers (most often ninjas from Doma and beyond) in countless other ways including, but not limited to, the climbing of ramparts or castle walls, the picking of locks, or even the forging of missives.

Avengers

The establishment of the Grand Companies—while beneficial to Eorzea's safety—caused many a headache for the land's weaponsmiths, as a great quantity of high-quality Company-issued weaponry began passing into the hands of adventurers and mercenaries the realm over, significantly reducing the demand for privately forged blades, spears, and knuckles. The radical design of the aether-assisted Avengers was conceived by smithies in an attempt to recapture the public's attention.

Acantha Shavers

Conceived by Ala Mhigan blacksmith Adelulf Deepforge, these exotic knuckles of brilliant brass wrap around not only the fist, but the forearm as well, promoting the flow of chakra energies from the wielder into his target.



Kaiser Knuckles

"When cataclysm loomed over the Near East, the hero Mirza arose to defend the people from fell fiends. Once he had torn the monsters apart, he raised a mighty empire—and fashioned a pair of weapons such as these from his foes' claws!"

Renowned Hannish alchemist, Jalzahn Daemir

Hellish Claws

The Sons of Saint Coinach have concluded that this pair of metal gloves discovered on the north shore of Silvertear Lake were actually an abstract form of weaponry employed by Allagan mages who required their hands free to weave their magicks. Research also revealed that they may have been created from the fangs of a creature summoned from the void.

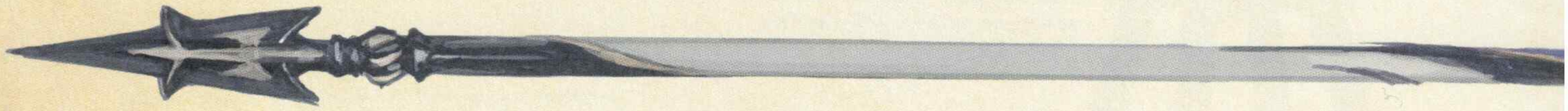
Sudarshana Chakra

Discovered hidden beneath a stone in a meditation chamber carved into the cliffs enveloping Rhalgr's Reach, these impressive gloves were one of few monastic relics spared the destruction wrought by the mad king Theodoric during his purge of the Fist of Rhalgr. They have since been returned to Widargelt the Watcher and are once again amongst the monks they were made to protect.

THE POLEARM

Since mankind could lift fallen boughs from the earth have spears played an integral part in their everyday lives. Once widely used for hunting prey, the simple, yet deadly weapons are now found commonly on battlefields from Vylbrand in the west to Hingashi in the east, though their construction and design vary greatly by region.

The earliest of spears were carved from the hearts of hardwood oaks and elms, their tips sharpened into piercing points. Later, these tips were replaced with flint, obsidian, or even bone heads that were secured to the haft with cured leather. At the advent of the bronze age, stone heads gave way to ones forged from metal, complete with deep sockets which could be bolted to the spear's haft, ensuring the blade not detach upon impact with a target. Knowledge of lighter, stronger alloys, as well as improved forging and molding techniques eventually saw even the wooden hafts of spears fall into disuse, metal lengths supplanting brittle wood and increasing durability and strength twofold.



Prominent Designs

Spear

The most basic of all polearms, the spiked pin at the base of the spear's head not only secures the head to the haft, but also prevents the weapon from penetrating too far into a victim's body and becoming lodged beneath sinew and bone.

Trident

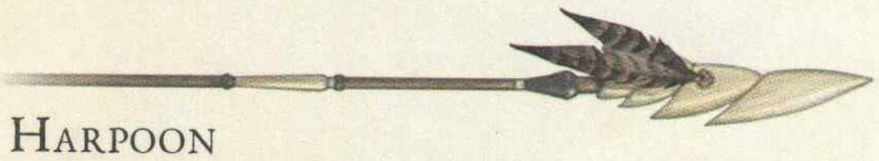
Once reserved for the spears used by shoal fishers, the benefits of a three-pronged head (increased lethality and the added ability to snare an opponent's blade) were discovered when, during a time of barren seas, the fishers took their jigs and nets to the bloodsands to earn coin for their families.

Lance

The blunted tip of a lance is not intended to pierce, but rather force an enemy rider from his horse or chocobo. This has not, however, discouraged those of the Lancers' Guild from contriving other means by which one might disable an opponent with this unwieldy, yet deadly weapon.

Halberd

Part polearm, part axe, this weapon affords its wielder with an array of options in battle, from slashing with the axe blade, to piercing with the pointed spear tip, to tripping or dismounting an opponent with the blade's many hooks.



Harpoon

For ages have these heavy, barbed polearms been used on Hyuran fishing vessels to subdue some of the Deep's most formidable creatures. When (as a result of overharvesting) a large population of Hyur emigrated from the Eorzean coastline into the Black Shroud, they brought with them their harpoons, which were soon adapted for hunting amongst the trees.

Guisarme

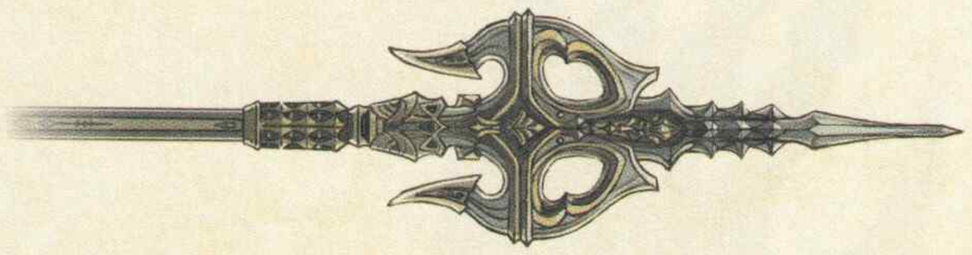
Much like the halberd, the guisarme is a combination of two distinctly different weapons—the polearm and the scythe. And, as is the case with the halberd, the guisarme can be used not only to both reap and transfix, but also to hook and trip.

Iwa-toshi

Technically not a spear, but a long-hafted blade of Far Eastern origin known as a "naginata," Iwa-toshi was used for many years in the defense of a sacred Doman temple until its wielder died and the weapon was sealed in the temple's sacristy. When the temple was destroyed during the Garleans' religious purge, the relic was confiscated and presented to a high-ranking military official.

Grasitha

Described in the *Enchiridion* as one of the lost treasures of the See, Grasitha is said to have been created on the battlefield by Ser Branthuc the Meek during the final march of Thordan's twelve. Having shattered his sword on the scales of a mighty drake, the knight reshaped the sundered blade into a spear using naught but the warhammer of a fallen companion and the pyre upon which his brothers burned.

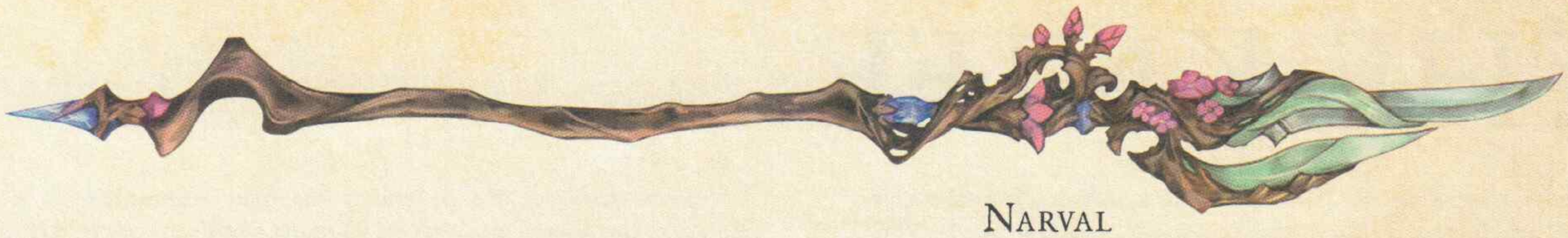


Thavnairian Partisan

Parades held to exhibit the ruling houses' military prowess are common occurrences in Radz-at-Han, and much coin is spent outfitting their participants with elaborately decorated weaponry that the lesser houses might know their place. That said, the spears on display are not merely for show, for under the glitter and gilding lies the potential to wreak untold havoc.

Thundercloud

Its head carved from the horn of a Coerthan behemoth, a single strike from Thundercloud can prove as deadly, if not more, than a storm of levinbolts. Rare leathers have been wound about the overlong stock to provide the wielder with enhanced grip, while the butt has been outfitted with a razor-sharp trident as a means of impaling pursuers.

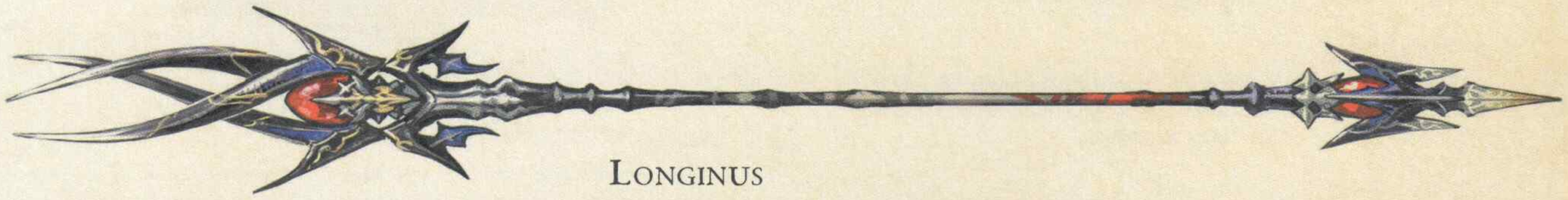


Narval

Nigh five score summers past, a Near Eastern trader, seeking favor within the royal court of Ala Mhigo, presented King Manfred with a gift whose mere procurement saw more than ten wives widowed—the twisted horn of a rare Narval. Awestruck by the sheer beauty of his new possession, he immediately ordered the royal smith create him a lance of the horn, and thus was a new legend born.

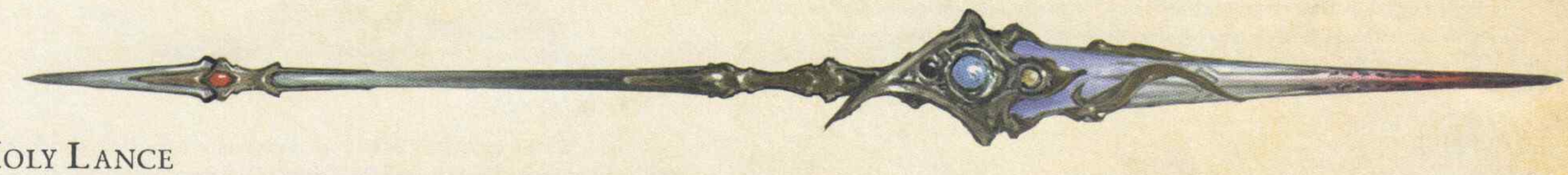
Ryunohige

Despite the Hingan name (which translates loosely to "dragon whisker"), this spear discovered by Estinien Wyrmblood on one of his many wanderings is a relic of the ancient age wherein dragon and man lived in harmony. How it came to be called thus is a matter for much speculation, though one theory suggests that its creator may have been of Far Eastern birth.



Longinus

After taking part in the execution of a falsely accused saint, Longinus—a low-ranking soldier—set off on a journey to seek atonement for lacking the courage to defy his commander's orders. For the remainder of his life, the guilt-stricken man used the very spear with which he committed his sin to deliver countless souls from evil, ultimately earning him the title, "Zodiac Brave."

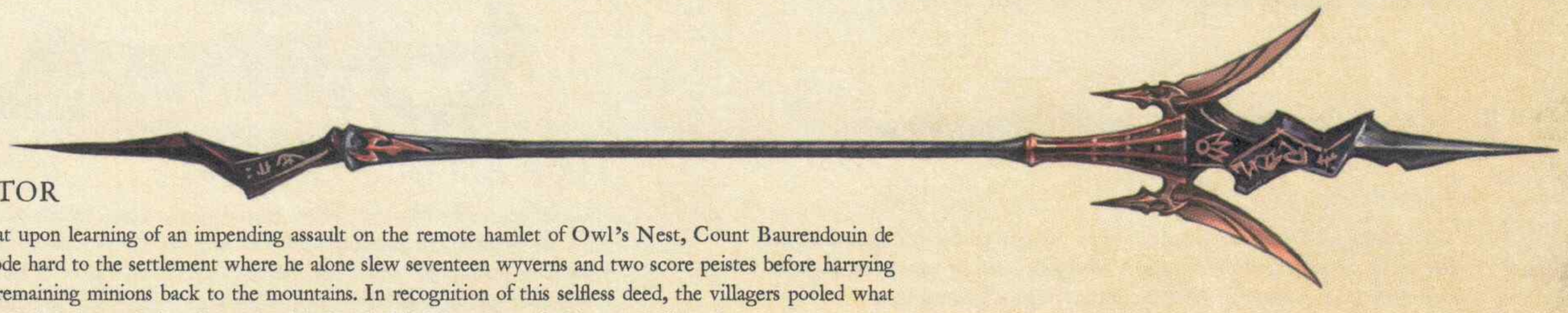


Holy Lance

Several of these ornate polearms were unearthed at Saint Coinach's Find by a dig team led by anthropogeographer Rammbroes Zasertylsyn. Judging from the numerous stone inscriptions unearthed alongside the weapons, they were most likely employed by elite chevaliers in the early years of the Third Astral Era, before the empire had forsaken religious dogma for science.

Wyvern Spear

This heavy lance was originally a gift from the reigning Ishgardian archbishop to Ser Iolaine Lightheel—a knight oft attributed with the pioneering of the battle maneuver known in common parlance as the Spineshatter Dive. The head was designed to resemble a wyvern in flight, for many of her fellow knights claimed that when Iolaine leapt she would rise higher than the Horde.



Liberator

It is said that upon learning of an impending assault on the remote hamlet of Owl's Nest, Count Baurendouin de Haillenarte rode hard to the settlement where he alone slew seventeen wyverns and two score peistes before harrying the Horde's remaining minions back to the mountains. In recognition of this selfless deed, the villagers pooled what little coin they had and commissioned mastersmith Gerolt Blackthorn to craft this extraordinary lance.

THE KNIFE

From the dawn of the First Astral Era to the modern day, knives have ever enjoyed a place at man's side, whether be it as tool, utensil, or weapon. While its short blade has seen the knife relegated to a sidearm on the field of battle, the weapon is granted the opportunity to shine upon occasions when a certain modicum of stealth or subtlety is preferred to mere brute force. Knives can be concealed in sleeves or on ankles, their tips applied with all manner of poisons. Throats can be slit, sinew severed, arteries opened—all with the flick of a wrist, and all before the victim realizes his ill fate. Moreover, knives can be thrown with frightening accuracy to deliver fatal blows at a score paces or more.

There even exist orders of noble brigands—the rogues of Limsa Lominsa and the ninjas of Doma—who have mastered the secrets of knife and dagger, turning the weapons' shortcomings into a tactical advantage. By equipping blades in both hands, their flurry of cuts can prove deceptively fatal, bleeding an enemy dry before he has the opportunity to strike back. Unlike the sword, axe, or club, which require brute strength to ply, even the slightest of Lalafells might find themselves on equal footing with a larger foe should they carry with them the knowledge of the knife. One might go so far as to suggest that it is this accessibility that has seen the stout weapons' popularity grow in recent years.

Prominent Designs

Knives

Knives can literally come in all shapes and sizes, and while most feature blades of metal or stone, there are some, like the example in the accompanying diagram, that are carved from the horns of fantastical beasts such as the behemoth.

Daggers

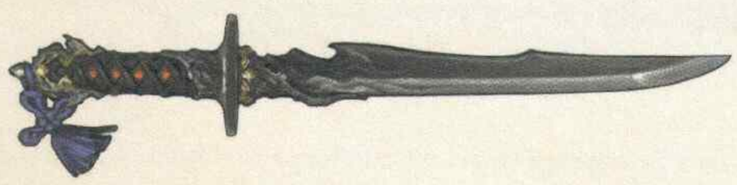
Though the blade is double-edged, it is the point of a dagger that one must fear. Many a knight clad in full plate has survived the blows of a thousand swords, only to fall to the thrust of a stiletto 'neath his pauldron.

Pugiones

Oft carried into battle as supplements to larger weapons, pugiones are crafted with overly thick blades to prevent shattering. They were also once widely used to grant injured comrades the mercy of a swift death—a necessity grown less common since the resurgence of white magicks.

Jambiyas

Both edges of the jambiya's blade are razor-sharp—a quality not often seen in curved blades—allowing this weapon to be used not only like a knife, but like a hand sickle. There are several cultures along the Ilsabardian coast in which possession of a jambiya is an indicator of the completion of one's journey into adulthood.

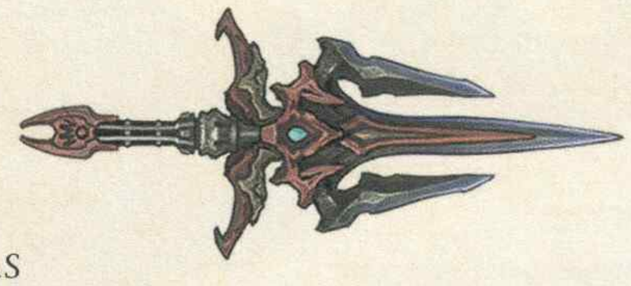


Tanto

Their name meaning literally "short katana," the designs used to forge these Far Eastern knives are almost identical to those used to craft katana—the length of the blade and the degree of its curve being the only notable differences.

Vajras

Denizens of the Othardian mainland believe vajras to be divine instruments once wielded by the very gods themselves. As such, their use by mortals for purposes other than those indicated in divine scripture is highly frowned upon.



Vajras

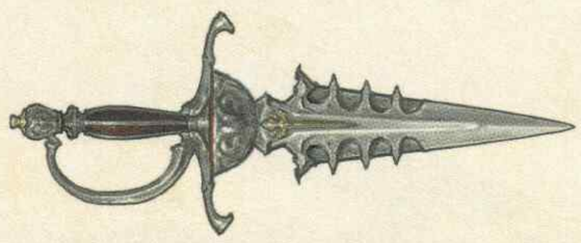
Mastersmith Gerolt Blackthorn's take on the traditional Far Eastern dagger, the vajras' unique trifurcated blades act much like the head of a trident, allowing their wielder to ensnare his enemies' weapons and snap them with a twist of the wrist.

Belah'dian Cinquedea

From the aetherially conductive gold inlay, to the inverted Y shape of the blade, these antique daggers discovered amongst the Belah'dian ruins of southern Thanalan bear a striking similarity in both design and utility to those described in Mhachi tomes—the latter having been widely used in the Fifth Astral Era's War of the Magi.

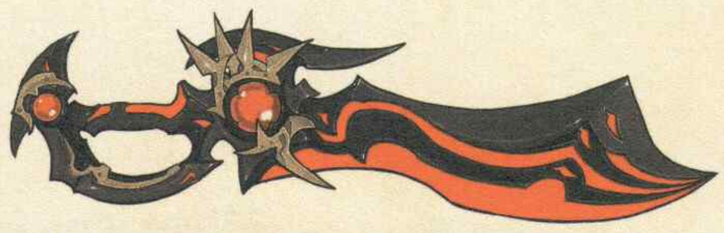
Air Knives

Two of the most remarkable items to be discovered at Saint Coinach's Find, these Allagan relics dating back to the Third Astral Era are constructed with an ultralight alloy that, according to the Lalafellin scholar who unearthed the blades, is "lighter than air." As to the alloy's makeup, however, modern metallurgists continue to remain baffled.



Halonic Vicar's Main Gauches

Close-range combat can leave an attacker's hands exposed to grave injury, rendering him unable to hold his weapon. To protect those of one wielding a main gauche, a knuckle-bow has been fitted to the dagger's jeweled grip. Toothlike serration on the base of the blade is used for both parrying attacks, as well as sawing flesh and bone.



High Allagan Cleavers

Shaped more like butchers' blades than daggers, these brilliant sable cleavers are a vestige of an age long forgotten. The weapons appear to have been imbued with some manner of ancient Allagan magicks and will glow blood red when wielded—a reaction most likely triggered by the wielder's flow of internal aether.

Nagi

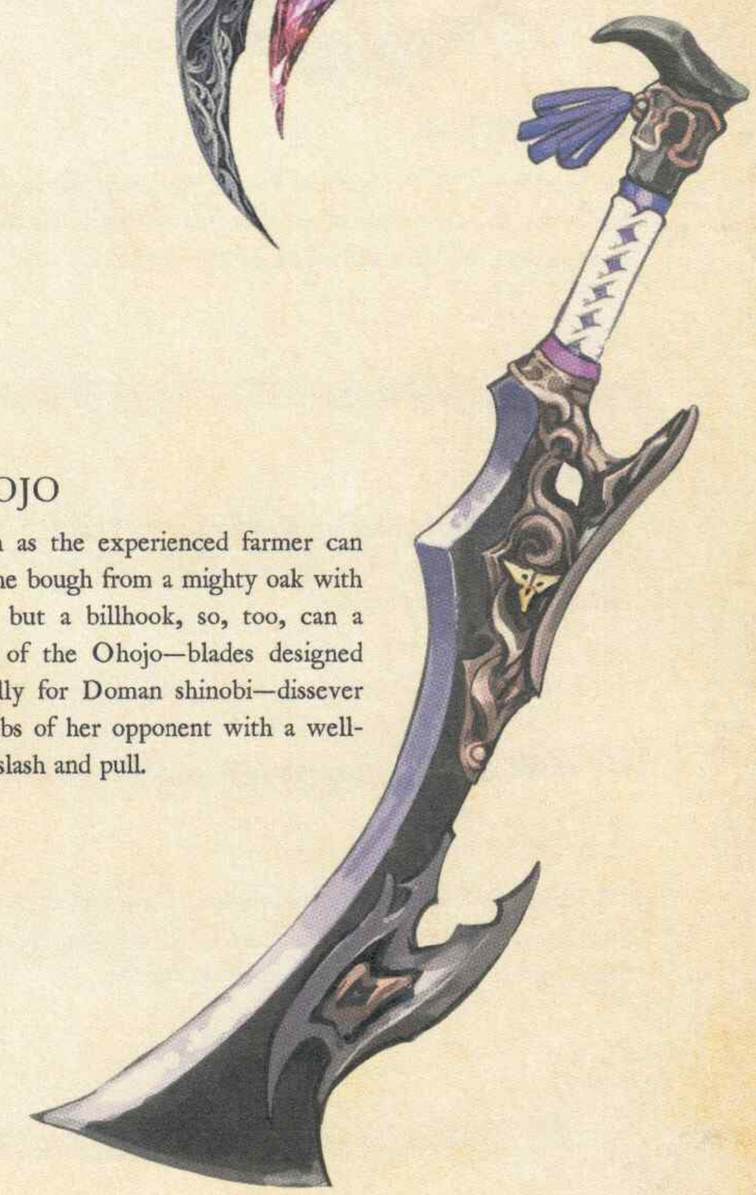
Stolen from a temple where the blades—believed to be kami of the wind and rain—were worshipped for countless centuries, the scythe-like Nagi were finally recovered when discovered on the corpse of a kunoichi sent to Doma Castle to assassinate Lord Kaien.

Kards

Ala Mhigo's most terrible of tyrants, mad king Theodoric, is said to have commissioned Eshtaime's Lapidaries to craft this pair of bejeweled daggers for use in sacrificial rites. The gems fitted to the blade are positioned to absorb the lifeblood of a victim, adding to the weapon's aetherial potency.

Ohojo

Much as the experienced farmer can shear the bough from a mighty oak with naught but a billhook, so, too, can a master of the Ohojo—blades designed especially for Doman shinobi—dissever the limbs of her opponent with a well-placed slash and pull.



Misericordes

Pride of Limsa Lominsa's Naldiq & Vymelli's, each misericorde consists of a pair of tempered blades attached to a polished grip via a complex system of gears. Using this mechanism, the blades can be folded back for storage or concealment. The gears, however, must be oiled regularly lest they jam upon the blades' release.

Sasuke's Blades

Legend has that these blades were used by the renowned shinobi Sasuke to deliver the people of Doma from the rule of a powerful tyrant—a deed that some believe earned him the title of Zodiac Brave. Since then, the exquisite daggers have remained with the ninja's family, being passed down from generation to generation to those heirs deemed worthy.

THE KATANA

When the earliest settlers crossed the Ruby Tide to Hingashi, they brought with them the weapons of their ancestors—the most prominent being the traditional Yanxian longsword. These dual-edged straight-bladed swords continued to see use on the island nation for centuries, their design changing little from those which had made the original journey from Othard. The longsword, however, soon fell out of fashion on the continent, and was replaced by the single-edged, sharply curved scimitars popular amongst Nagxian cavalry. This change eventually made its way to Hingashi, though a lack of a true cavalry on the islands lessened the necessity for such a pronounced grade of inflection. The outcome was the modest curvature seen in modern-day katana.

Still, for many years, swords of Hingan origin were considered far substandard to those forged in Yanxia—Hingan blacksmiths unable to do more than merely copy techniques refined across the narrow sea. This all changed when a swordmaker from Kugane discovered and perfected a method of folding steel—a process that, when performed correctly, results in a highly tensile core encased in a nigh-indestructible shell. The blades' strength and beauty (exotic patterns in the steel a by-product of the folding) made the katana attractive to Hingashi's samurai caste, whose demand for the weapons fueled not only the advancement of further blacksmithing techniques, but also saw the emergence of scabbards as aetherial vessels wherein a warrior's "Kenki" might be stored.

Prominent Designs

Chokken

The oldest of all Far Eastern katana, the design of the chokken, or longsword, can be traced back to that of the most holy of blades, Ame-no-Murakumo. Unlike most katana, the blade is dual-edged and uncurved.

Chokuto

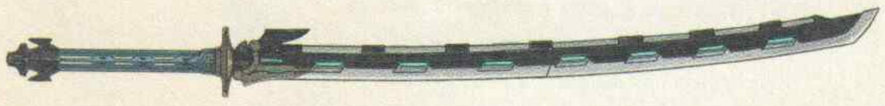
Though rare today, history shows there were ages in which straight-bladed, single-edged katana were used throughout the Far East, albeit largely for ceremonial or ritual purposes.

Tachi

Designed for use on horseback, tachi are long and markedly curved to improve reach. A tachi's maker can be identified by gauging the severity of the blade's "shinogi," or the slight ridge rising from the flat.

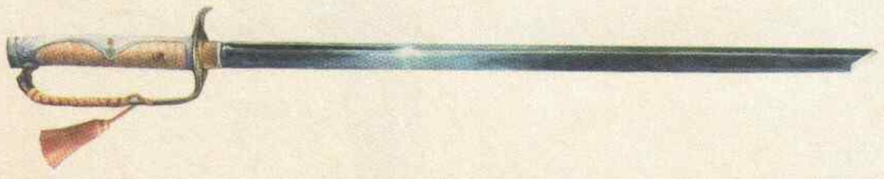
Uchigatana

Whereas the tachi is most effective when wielded on horseback, the short-bladed uchigatana is best used on the crowded battlefield where space can prove severely limited.



Madoto

By combining the wonders of magitek with traditional Far Eastern techniques, the engineers of the Garlond Ironworks have created a katana with a fully retractable blade for ease of carrying and swiftness of deployment. Needless to say, many of Hingashi's swordsmiths see this "aberration" as naught more than a slight to their craft.

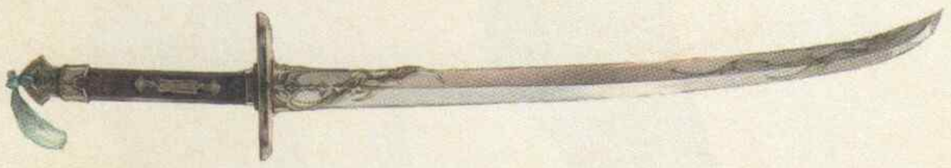


Gunto

As contact with the West has increased, so has the Hingans' interest in Eorzea's martial prowess, especially following the Eorzean Alliance's recent victories over the Garlean Empire. Some masters of swordcraft have even taken to incorporating Western designs in their creations, the straight-bladed gunto being one such example.

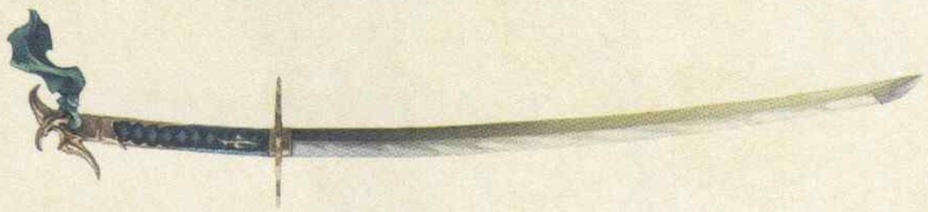
Okanehira

The first blade of its kind to cross the Ruby Sea into Yanxia, it is said that upon witnessing Okanehira's beauty, the East Othardians threw down their crude, stout blades and begged the Hingan visitors teach them the secrets of the katana's creation. Thus did the longstanding Doman tradition of katanacraft first yield to Hingashi.



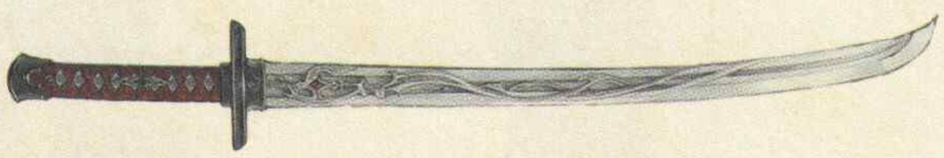
Kotetsu

A little more than a century ago, a common blacksmith by the name of Okisato was struck by inspiration. He surmised that if he specialized not only in weapons, but in armor as well, he could rise amongst the ranks of his peers. By testing his blades on the armor he forged, and the armor he forged on his blades, Okisato was able to advance his skill in both sword- and armorsmithing, which filled his coffers and eventually earned him much prestige.



Martial Katana

Thought lost after the fall of the Dusk Vigil to Nidhogg's Horde, the martial katana was later discovered by an adventurer seeking to reclaim the citadel for Ishgard. Research into the blade's origin revealed that it was most likely owned by a knight of House Durendaire who secretly imported the sword from the Far East after hearing rumor of its capacity for piercing dragon scale—a claim that the proud house vehemently denies.



Shire Katana

The brainchild of Idyllshire's twisted genius Stickqix, this katana combines Sharlayan sensibility with goblin ingenuity to create a celebration of the harmony between the two cultures.

Ala Mhigan Katana

So moved were the smiths of Ala Mhigo at witnessing Doman warriors risk their lives for the sake of another's freedom that, when their city-state was liberated, they pledged to create a commemorative sword that none might ever forget the kindness shown by their brothers from the Far East. The blade has been imbued with traditional magicks to promote the transference of spiritual energies.

Alexandrian Metal Katana

Forged in the flames of Alexander's metal belly, this katana was crafted by the goblins of the Illuminati for use in their defense of the walking fortress. An aether accelerator was equipped near the hilt to improve the potency of Kenki at the time of the stored energy's release. Unfortunately, not a single one of the mad beastmen could utilize the blade to its full potential, and so it was locked away in a coffer for safekeeping.

Tenguto

Crafted by the tengu and imbued with the enigmatic tribe's queer magicks, the blade is unlike any other seen in the Far East. Despite extensive study by master swordsmiths from across both Doma and Hingashi, none have been able to determine by what means spikes emerge from the blade when drawn from its sheath.

Katana of the Dragon Lotus

As much a work of art as a tool of war, the nigh-indestructible blade of this katana is adorned from hilt to tip with mesmerizing swirls of inlaid gold which seem to float along the steel like clouds in the heavens. It is said that to achieve such wonderment, its crafter first received the blessing of Seiryu, auspice and one of the Four Lords.

Kanesada

Kanesada, a swordsmith known for his service to the powerful Yatsurugi clan, is oft heralded as a living legend, his intricately decorated creations drawing much interest from buyers the world over. Therefore, it was viewed as somewhat of a coup when several of the rare katana appeared for sale at Rowena's House of Splendors.

Samonji

Crafted by Samonji—the sheathe gilded with his trademark symbol of three coins—the eponymous blade was, until recently, wielded by none other than Gosetsu Daito, commander of Doma's standing army. Imagine the surprise of collectors across Hingashi when the sword forged by the pupil of the Far East's most prestigious swordsmith, Masamune, mysteriously turned up in the hands of a Kugane pawnbroker.

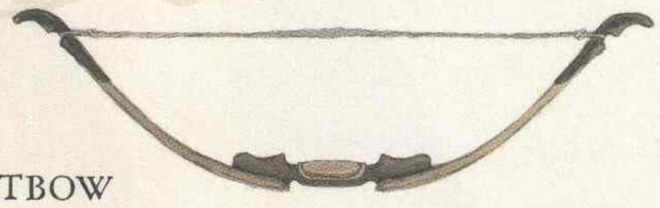
THE BOW

While we cannot be certain when the first bows came into use, scholars of archaeology have discovered cave paintings they believe to date back to the First Astral Era showing parties of hunters firing arrow-like projectiles into packs of aurochs and elk. Though no examples of these weapons remain extant, clues as to their composition can be found in Allagan transcriptions of Second Astral Era holy texts, which reveal early bows were simple constructs of pliant wood such as yew or bamboo and a bowstring of hemp, silk, or sinew drawn taut from the notched tips of joined limbs.

As craftsmen became more skilled, however, the bow's design grew more complex. Materials were combined to reinforce the limbs, grips expanded to improve stability and aim, and cam mechanisms added to increase string tension. The bow's overall shape also underwent a steady evolution, the size and structure of limbs adapting to the style of fighting employed by individual bowmen. Bows wielded on chocoback as secondary weapons shrunk while those equipped by castle archers nearly doubled in size to increase range. Even the bow's riser—the joint interlocking the two limbs—was twisted and extended into a shallow M to provide a better sight window.

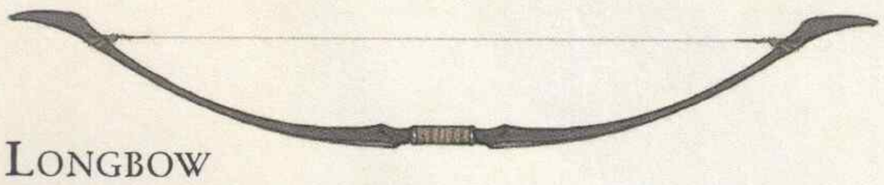
The bow underwent its most notable reshaping when, in the early Sixth Astral Era, bards began using their weapons to pluck out inspiring hymns on the battlefield, rousing spirits and restoring troop morale. To better accommodate this practice, bows were given extra strings, and soon, elaborate creations more harp than bow were common sights in armies across Eorzea.

Prominent Designs



Shortbow

Though lacking in range, the shortbow is well suited for hunting within a forest's tangle of roots and boughs. It has long been prized by Miqo'te tribes for its speed and versatility, allowing for precision whether it be while in pursuit of fleeing quarry, or perched atop unstable limbs waiting for a target.

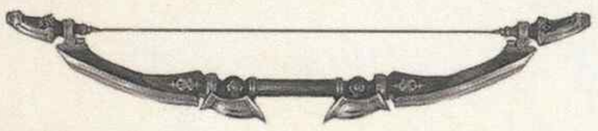


Longbow

A traditional weapon of the Elezen, the longbow asks much of its wielder in the way of strength and skill. Those who have mastered the weapon, however, can deal accurate killing blows from hundreds of paces or even pierce the very scales of a dragon in flight.

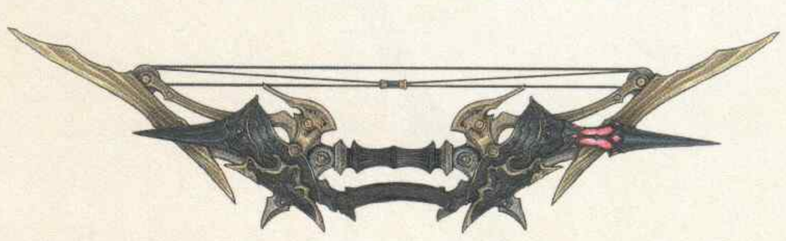
Composite Bow

As the name suggests, the limbs of these bows are composed of several different materials in an effort to improve strength and pliability. The shaping of such complex creations, however, is reserved for the most adept of craftsmen, for even a slight deviance in measurement can result in the bow's collapse with the mere nock of an arrow.



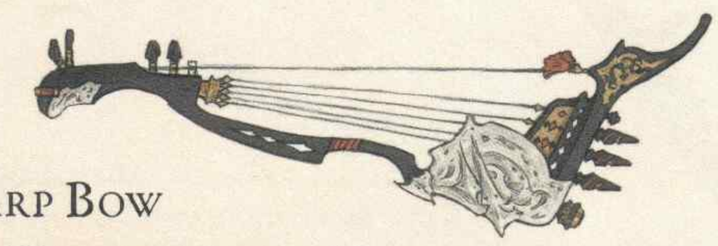
Cavalry Bow

Designed for use in the saddle, composite cavalry bows must be short and light so as to not prove a burden to riders who must accurately target their foes while maintaining precarious balance upon a speeding chocobo or horse.



Compound Bow

The partially mechanized compound bow employs a complex array of cables and pulleys to increase power and stability, while reducing the amount of strength required to draw its string.



Harp Bow

In addition to its main bowstring, this greatbow features several supplementary strings attached to the upper and lower limbs. These highly tensile ligatures, while not suited for nocking arrows, can be tuned to specific notes and played by the wielder in-between shots—common practice for the martial bards of Eorzea and beyond.

Halonic Auditor's Bow

Standard-issue ranged ordnance for the Holy See's order of monastic knights. While its limbs are carved from fine-grain wood, the bow is reinforced with Ishgardian steel to improve durability, and outfitted with a detachable lance head that can be used for defense when the enemy has closed.

Astrild

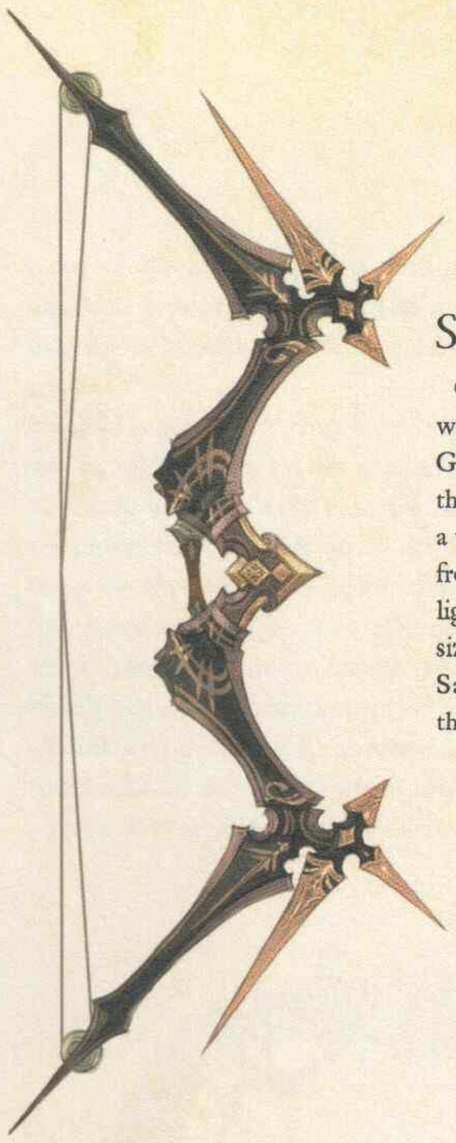
Though its artful design suggests it to be a product of modern Ishgardian bowcraft, the bow exhibits a powerful aetherial charge that could only have been applied via a wyrm's elemental breath, meaning that it was most likely crafted during an age when dragon and man were at peace—at least a thousand winters past.

Raijodo

Once the weapon of a bowman who honored King Ganen with his service for two score summers, Raijodo has remained with Clan Rijin ever since, and is regularly awarded to the finest archer in the family's standing army. It is said that with this very bow was the auspice Nue first slain some several centuries past.

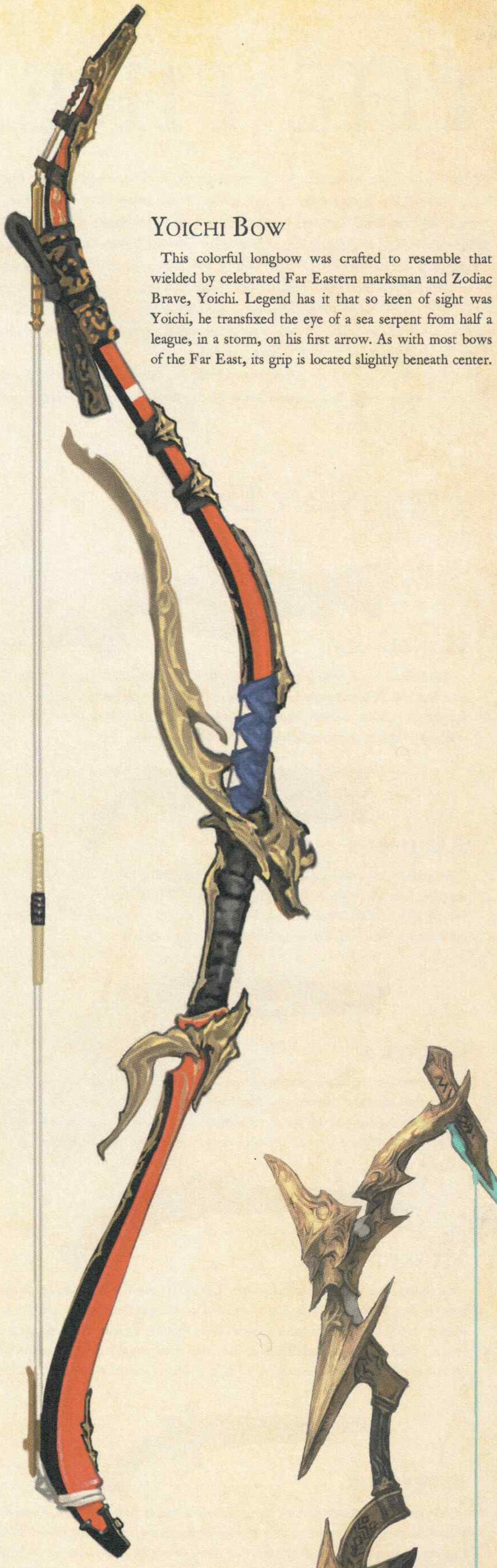
Failnaught

Upon learning that battlesongs had returned to fashion, Carpenters' Guild guildmaster Beatin Mainrocquat retreated to his workshop to create Failnaught—a longbow hybrid combining the modern convenience and functionality of a compound bow with a traditional harp bow design; a weapon that would literally ring in a new era of choral combat.



Sarnga

Geopolitical turmoil at the end of the Sixth Astral Era would eventually lead to the reestablishment of Eorzea's Grand Companies—localized armies which saw to both the defense of their respective city-states and the realm as a whole. To outfit these men and women, weaponsmiths from across Aldenard toiled in their workshops creating light, compact weapons that soldiers of all shapes and sizes could carry into battle without being cumbered. Sarnga—a collapsible compound designed by a veteran of the Carpenters' Guild—was one such creation.



Yoichi Bow

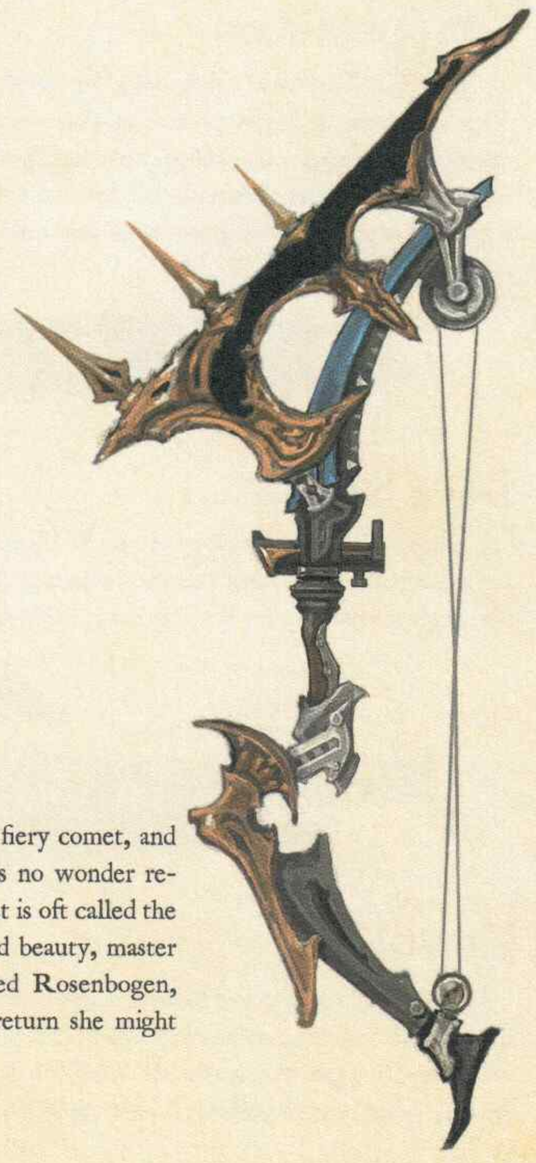
This colorful longbow was crafted to resemble that wielded by celebrated Far Eastern marksman and Zodiac Brave, Yoichi. Legend has it that so keen of sight was Yoichi, he transfixed the eye of a sea serpent from half a league, in a storm, on his first arrow. As with most bows of the Far East, its grip is located slightly beneath center.

Elfin Bow

Discovered by the Sons of Saint Coinach amongst a cache of weapons apparently seized by the Allagan Empire during their conquest of the Three Great Continents, this particular bow is documented as having belonged to a lost race of tall, slender beings known as "Elves." Some speculation has been made as to the Elves' relationship to modern-day Elezen, yet evidence proving a definitive connection has yet to be found.

Kaman

It was at the coronation ceremony following Anshelm Cotter's unification of the independent Gyr Abanian clans that an emissary from a distant Near Eastern nation presented the new king with this ornate bow of rare ivory. So beautiful was the gift that, according to popular belief, Anshelm was left speechless—a first for the outspoken conqueror of men.



Rosenbogen

With locks a-flowing like the tail of a fiery comet, and skin the crimson of an autumn eve, it is no wonder renowned Hellsguard archer Early Harvest is oft called the "Rose." To celebrate both her skill and beauty, master weaponsmith Gerolt Blackthorn crafted Rosenbogen, mayhap with a foolish longing that in return she might permit him "fill her quiver" as well.

Terpander

Another collaborative effort of Gerolt Blackthorn and Hannish alchemist Ardashir Balyk, the crystal alloy used in both limb and twine was specially conceived to provide a stable environment for the elemental anima to be housed within. As a result, the twang following a loosed arrow is said to exhibit a somewhat metallic resonance similar to that of a Far Eastern koto.

THE FIREARM

Scholars have yet to determine the exact period in time when the first firearms were conceived, though two distinct paths of evolution have been identified: Allagan and Garlean. The first was confirmed with the recent discovery of small handheld cannons at Allagan dig sites in Mor Dhona. These simple mechanisms, dating back to pre-imperial Third Astral Era, were powered by a powder of finely ground fire and wind crystals that would be ignited using a simple incantation of flame. The resulting explosion would cause air generated by the wind aether to rapidly expand, forcing a stone or metal projectile from the cannon's barrel in the general direction it was pointed.

The Allagans went on to refine these firearms, and by the time of Emperor Xande's second reign had created some of the most powerful weapons to ever have existed—veritable killing machines capable of slaying hundreds in but a matter of moments. For better or for worse, techniques for creating both the powder and the weapons it powered were temporarily lost when the Empire fell to the Calamity of Earth.

Firearms experienced a second, independent evolution in northern Ilsabard during the early Sixth Astral Era. A lack of natural affinity to magic forced the Garlean tribes to look elsewhere for a means by which to achieve prosperity—a means they discovered by way of machines. It was during this industrial revolution that the Garleans discovered black powder and applied it to create the weapons that would see their rise from a humble republic to an empire spanning half the world. Knowledge of these creations soon spread across the Three Great Continents, carried on the back of Garlemald's expansionist policies, and would serve as the basis for many of today's modern firearms. Outside of a few isolated factions in Limsa Lominsa and Ishgard, their usage in Eorzea remains quite limited, the magically adept denizens of the realm oft finding them unnecessary.

Prominent Designs

Handgonne

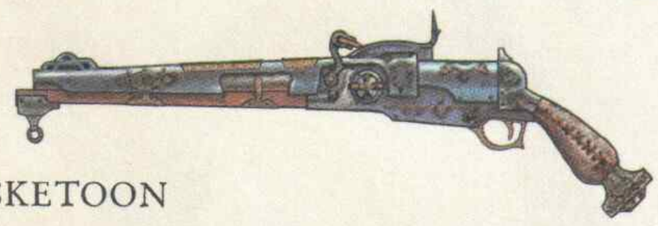
Also known as the hand cannon, the handgonne is presumably one of the realm's first firearms. Whereas early models consisted solely of single metal barrels tapered into crude handles, modern handgonnes come equipped with stocks and triggers, rendering their appearance similar to other firearm types.

Arquebus

Essentially a portable cannon, the recoil generated by a single firing of an arquebus can oft prove as fatal as the shot itself. To offset this, most arquebuses feature lugs on the bottom of their barrels which can be hooked to ship railing or battlements, steadying the weapon and improving accuracy.

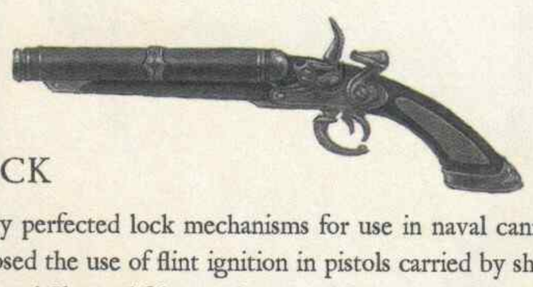
Culverin

A precursor to the musket and musketoon, the culverin is considerably smaller and lighter than the hand cannons that came before it, yet still too large to effectively wield with one hand by all but the stockiest of races. As such, grips are added to the underside of the weapons' barrels to improve stability when aiming.



Musketoon

By significantly reducing barrel length, gunmakers were finally able to create a weapon that, while lacking in force, could be aimed and fired with a single hand, leaving the off hand free to carry a shield, grasp rigging, or even fire a second musketoon. Their compact size and ease of use made them popular amongst sailors who did not require the power or range of a longrifle when confined to the deck of a ship.



Flintlock

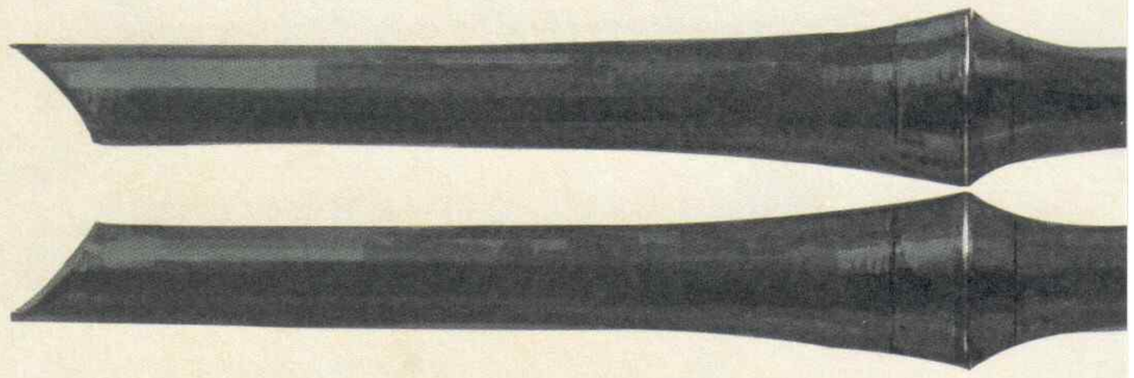
Having already perfected lock mechanisms for use in naval cannons, Lominsan gunsmiths proposed the use of flint ignition in pistols carried by ship crews. While improperly knapped flint and frizzens dampened in sea spray would come to be the cause of frequent misfires, the problem was solved (albeit only to a certain extent) by the addition of a second or even third barrel.

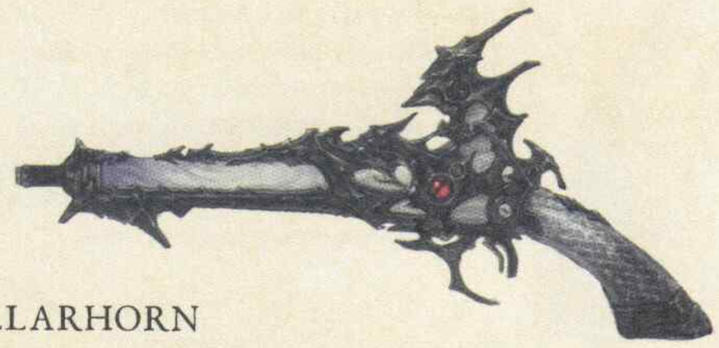
Revolver

For many years, the use of firearms in battle was limited, the reloading of a weapon too time-consuming to see it fired more than once or twice before armies finally clashed. The invention of the revolver and its mechanically indexing cylinder by the Garlean Republic changed all this, allowing for a swift, continuous barrage of lead without the burden of constant reloading.

Quick Silver

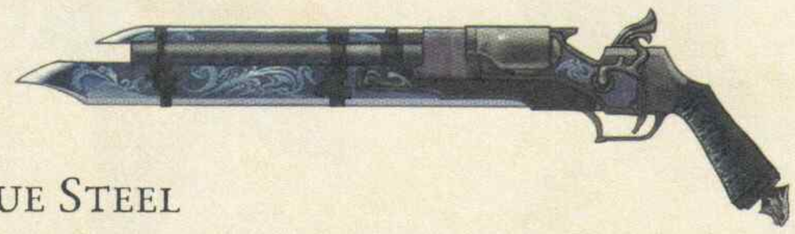
Desiring a weapon unlike any that had come before it, a wealthy Ul'dahn socialite commissioned Gerolt Blackthorn to create him a dueling pistol. Not overly familiar with the mechanics of firearms, Gerolt simply copied the design of a traditional culverin, adding a few embellishments to the stock and barrel so that his client might not soon become wise to his ruse. That said, being a creation of mastersmith Blackthorn, the quality of the resulting product was unarguably second to none, despite its run-of-the-mill origins.





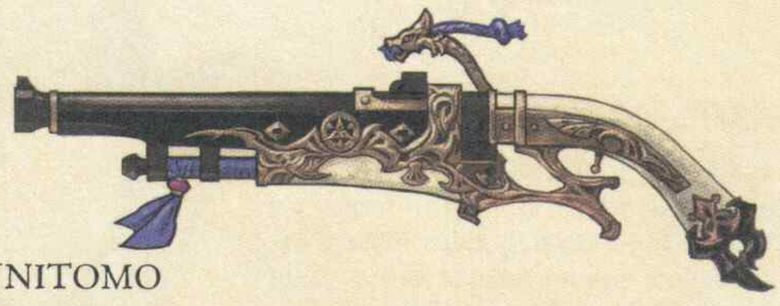
Gjallarhorn

Named for a mythical battle horn whose blast could "be heard in all worlds," and decorated with an elaborate web of iron wyrmwings and pair of all-seeing eyes, this compact firearm is another relic from an age in which man and dragon put their differences aside to live together in harmony. Why such a powerful weapon was needed in a time of peace is a question that may never be answered.



Blue Steel

A portable flintlock carried by House Haillenarte cannon operators, Blue Steel has fixed to its barrel a short bayonet that can be used in close-quarter encounters when reloading is no longer possible—a feature that has earned this style of firearm the name "knifelock."

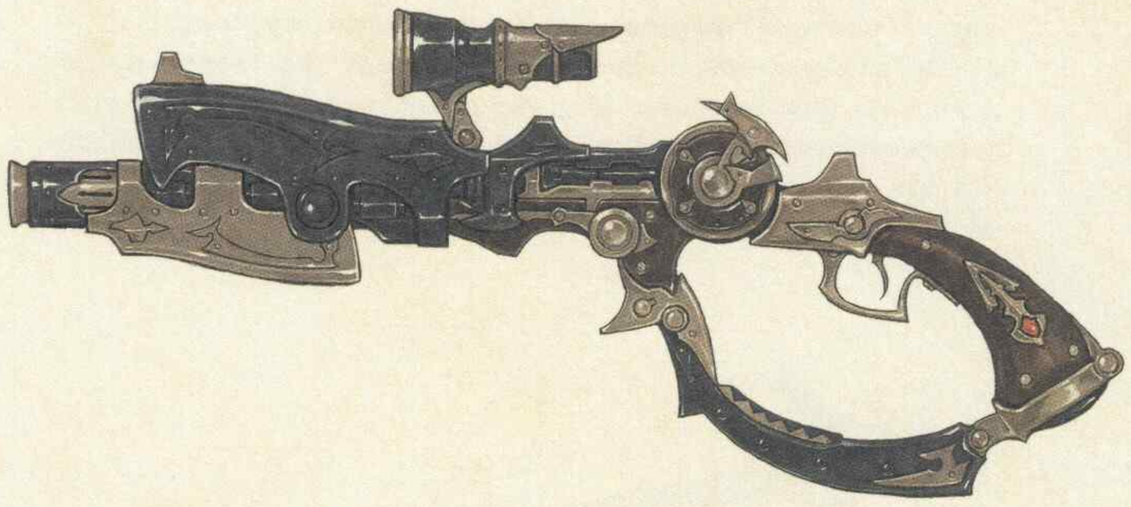


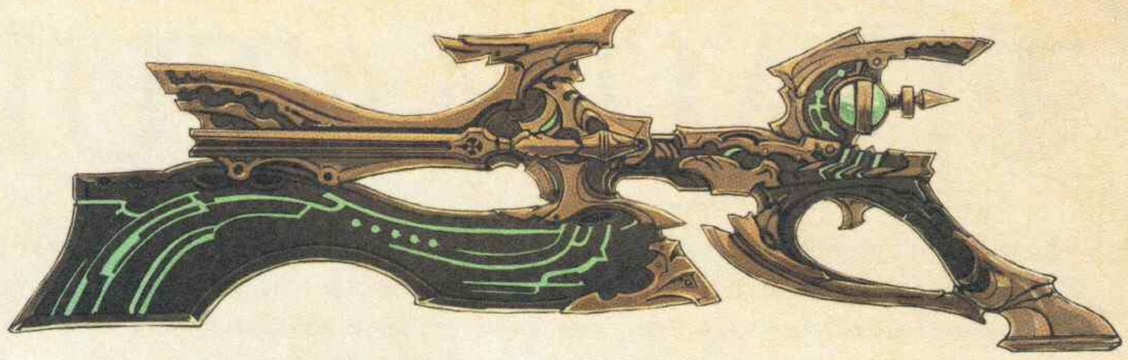
Kunitomo

A matchlock musket of Far Eastern design, this particular firearm was crafted in Kunitomo, a region of Hingashi renowned for its gunsmiths. While the isolationist bakufu strictly prohibits the export of these weapons to the mainland, several have found their way to Doma and beyond, where they are quickly bought up by collectors and locked away from prying eyes.

Nightsteel Blunderbuss

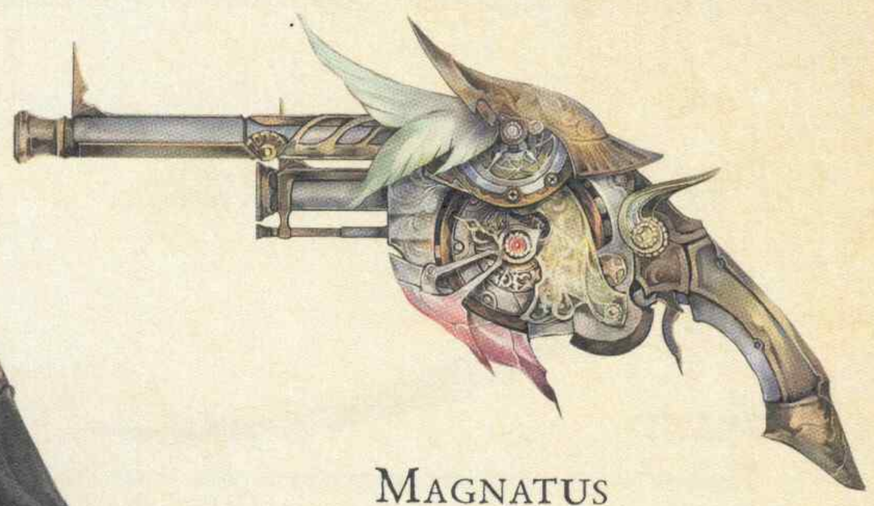
Created at Ishgard's Skysteel Manufactory, the nightsteel blunderbuss is not actually a blunderbuss—a type of firearm that is defined by its long, flared bore—but a modern handgonne. It earned this misnomer from the retractable flared scope which rests above the barrel.





Allagan Pistol

The Allagan pistol—standard-issue weaponry for the empire's infantry in the late Third Astral Era—uses a complex crystal injection system that sends concentrated wind energy into an aetherochemical accelerator where it is amplified to increase maximum projectile velocity.

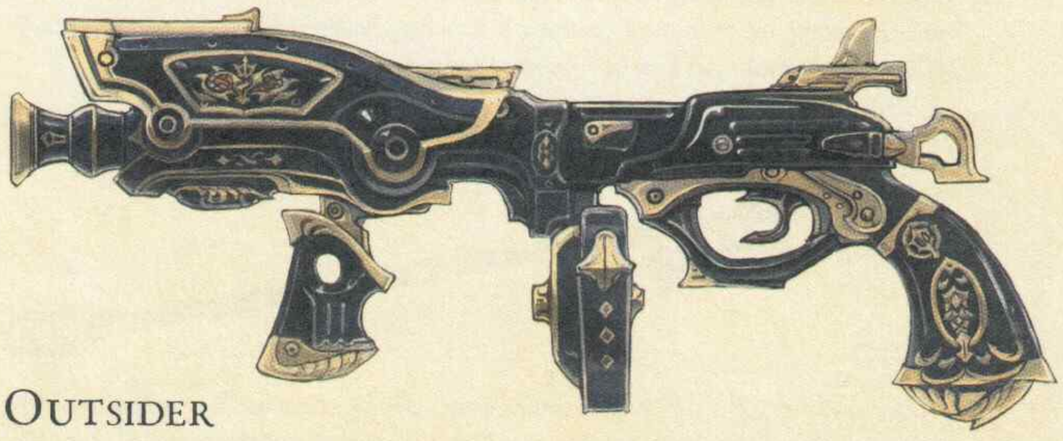


Armageddon

This jet black revolver crafted by Gerolt Blackthorn employs a pepperbox firing system that, instead of rotating a multi-chamber cylinder around a single barrel, sees the firearm's triune barrels revolve around a single axis. The reservatory affixed above the stock serves to house synthetic souls of Allagan design known as "anima."

Magnatus

One of two lavish gifts (the second being the bow, Kaman) presented to Anshelm Cotter by a Near Eastern emissary at the great unifier's coronation ceremony. The word "magnatus" can be translated from the Ilsabardian into "baron," "magnate," or "great man," a detail that most certainly pleased the newly crowned regent. As to whether its beauty also rendered Anshelm speechless, history leaves surprisingly no mention.



Outsider

Another of the Skysteel Manufactory's creations, Outsider employs a revolutionary drum-shaped magazine that is able to hold up to ten times more ammunition than a traditional revolver. For many years following its conceptualization, the invention remained shelved in a Machinists' Guild storeroom, its approval for mass production consistently denied by the Holy See's more conservative officials.

Deathlocke

Deathlocke is the culmination of countless moons of research, reforging, and refining by mastersmith Gerolt Blackthorn. Whereas the anima vessel in its predecessor, the Armageddon, required quarantine from the main body of the weapon, no such separation is required in this marvel of Allagan technology recreated for a new age.

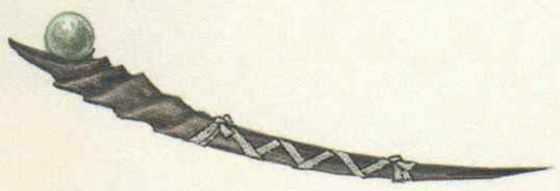
THAUMATURGES' ARMS

As the rise of organized faith ushered mankind from the bloody chaos of the First Astral Era, so were the secrets of aether manipulation—the secrets of magic—revealed unto the masses. What began as fervent prayer and choral hymns unexpectedly transformed into basic spells when paired with certain religious paraphernalia—crystal-encrusted staves and scepters serving as mediums to focus the caster's aether and make manifest the energies in the tangible forms of fire, ice, or levin.

Once the importance of elemental agency was realized, mankind began experimenting with all manner of substances, searching for those which exhibited more aptitude at channeling magicks than others. Nature, as always, was the best provider of such items, the bleached bones of mystic beasts, the gnarled boughs of ancient trees, and the glowing hearts of woodland sprites all proving to increase the chances of successfully casting a spell.

Over the next millennia, mankind's capacity to control aether burgeoned, and with it did the tools he used to manipulate those energies evolve. Both the Allagans and the Mhachi built entire civilizations on foundations of magic, with varying degrees of success. In their pursuit of ever more destructive incantations, the latter stumbled across a powerful medium they called "magicite." The elemental energies stored within these fragments of fallen stars proved powerful enough to rend the heavens, raining destruction down on their enemies while forcing open doors to darker realms. And while this folly eventually led to the end of an age, their cumulative knowledge lives on in the brands and cudgels wielded by mages today.

Prominent Designs

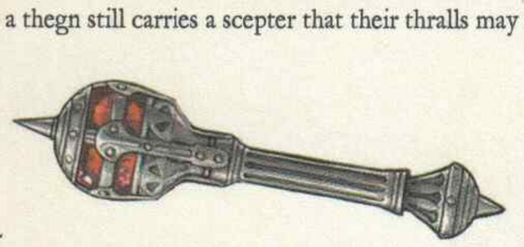


Brand

The most widespread of thaumaturges' arms, most brands consist of a stock carved from wood, bone, or horn affixed with an elementally aspected crystal or gemstone. Their simple, inexpensive design makes the mediums perfect for the training of inexperienced acolytes.

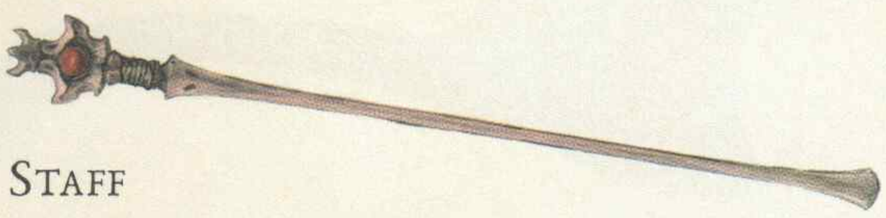
Scepter

From as early as the Second Astral Era have scepters been used by rulers as symbols of their standing. And while their hafts of aetherially charged metal and their heads of ruby and opal have seen them become the preferred weapon of spellcasters across the realm, many a thegn still carries a scepter that their thralls may know their place.



Cudgel

The turbulent Fifth Astral Era saw many practitioners of magic take to the fields of war as battlemages. To provide these important assets with a secondary means to protect themselves should they find their spiritual energies drained, aetherial mediums were reinforced with heavy metal casings and sharpened projections that they might be used to bludgeon an opponent if the need arose.



Staff

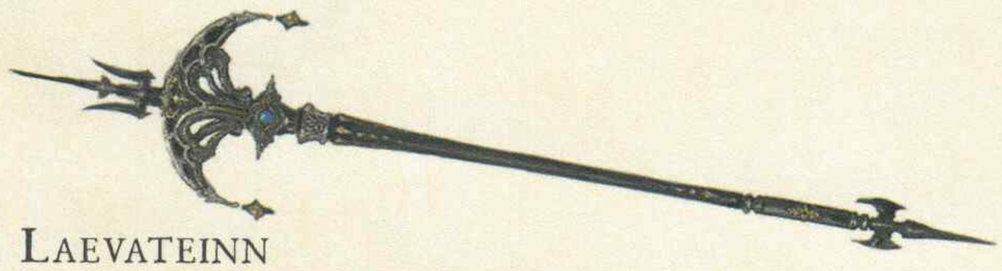
Not only does the extended haft of a staff provide the potential for increased elemental potency, but it can serve to keep an opponent at a manageable distance. It can even second as a crutch, should the mental strain suffered from expending one's will prove overwhelming.

Longpole

Similar to staves, longpoles provide mages with a physical means of fending off would-be attackers, while serving as the aetherial mediums to their spells. One marked difference between the two, however, are the bejeweled effigies attached to the longpoles' heads—elaborate images oft carved to resemble vilekin.

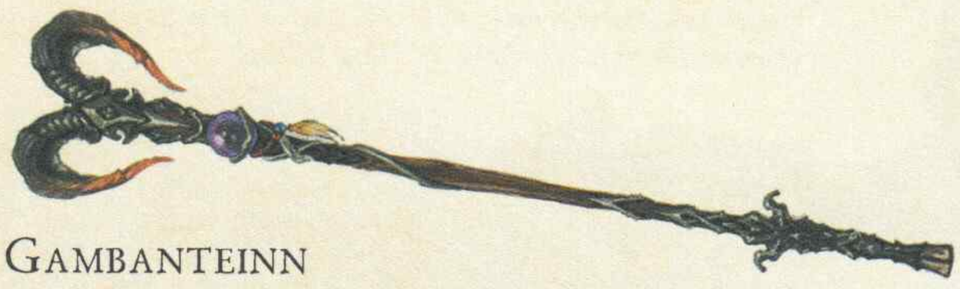
Rod

The use of rods as aetherial mediums is not a practice reserved for the West. Far Eastern Disciples of Magic have also developed similar arms with which they might harness the land's abundant energies. In fact, beyond ornamentation, there are almost no notable differences between a Hingan rod and an Eorzean brand.



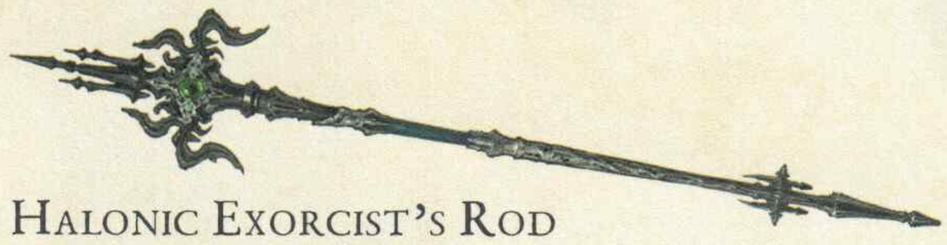
Laevateinn

Its name taken from an ancient word for "destruction" or "destructor," Laevateinn was created by Gerolt Blackthorn at the behest of former Thaumaturges' Guild guildmaster, Mumuepo the Beholden—the mage desiring an arcane vessel that could withstand the channeling of powerful magicks. The staff left Mumuepo's hands after his fall from grace some five summers past.



Gambanteinn

If the tales of heretics are to be believed, Gambanteinn was forged in a time when the bonds betwixt man and dragon were unbreakable, and used by an ancient wyrm to teach the secrets of draconian magicks to the people of Ishgard. As to the validity of these claims, only the dragons themselves might provide reasonable confirmation.



Halonic Exorcist's Rod

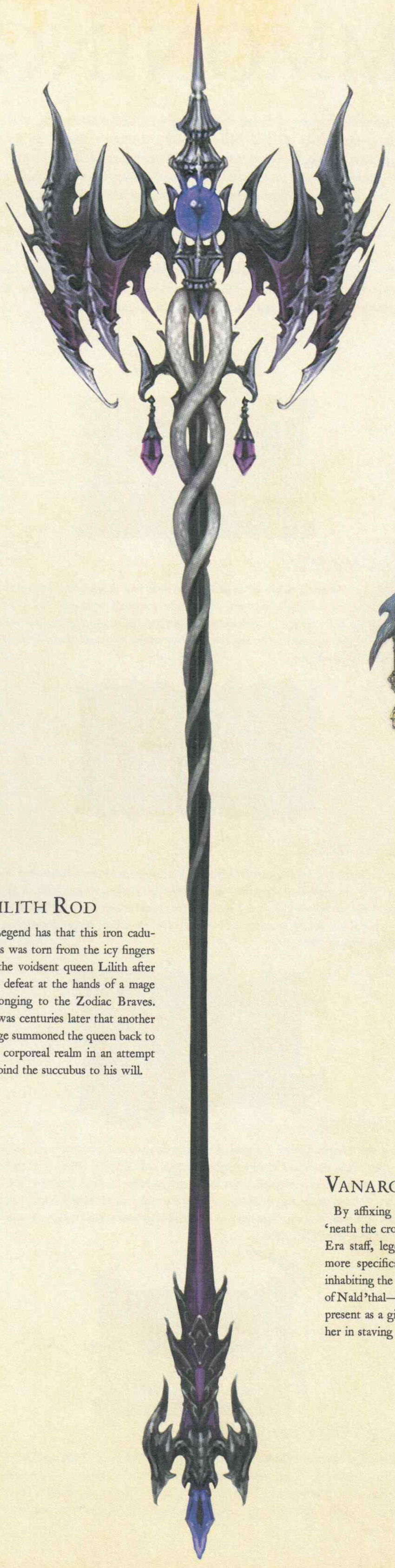
Long, Ishgardian steel rods such as these were once carried by those priests of the Holy See tasked with exorcising the blood of the Horde from heretic prisoners—a process that ended with a "blessing" of cleansing flame, and most often resulted in the death or extreme disfiguration of the victim.

Elder Staff

According to the Sons of Saint Coinach, staves such as these were administered to each of the thousands of infantry magi who marched with the Allagan Imperial Army. Despite recording heavy losses in most contests, it is widely believed to be the efforts of these spellcrafters that saw the Empire's borders expand as quickly as they did.

Kujo

Frustrated with his inability to foreshorten the suffering of his land's people at the hand of their cruel ruler, an ascetic monk set off on a journey of enlightenment with naught but his staff, Kujo, and the robes on his back. After a year having journeyed the entire length of the Dairyu Chain, the monk returned to Doma and presented the staff—now primed with the geomantic energies of water and wind—to his lord that he, too, might awaken to his vassals' plight.

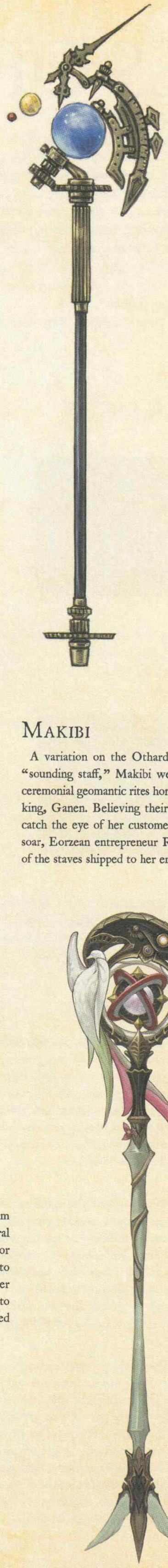


Lilith Rod

Legend has that this iron caduceus was torn from the icy fingers of the voidsent queen Lilith after her defeat at the hands of a mage belonging to the Zodiac Braves. It was centuries later that another mage summoned the queen back to the corporeal realm in an attempt to bind the succubus to his will.

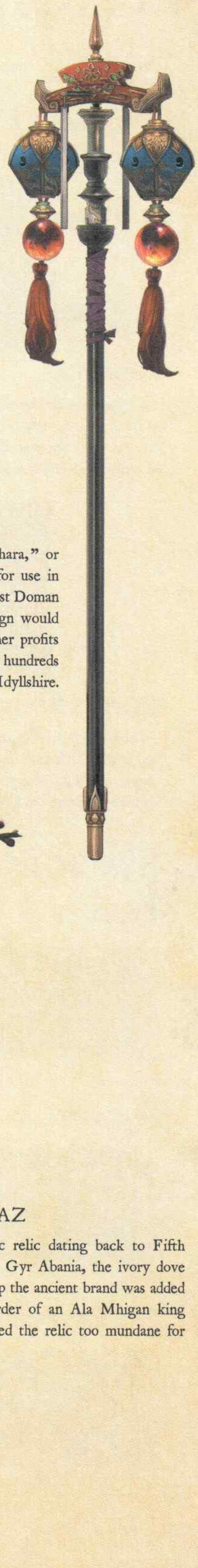
Vanargand

By affixing the core of a gemstone golem 'neath the crook of a weathered Fifth Astral Era staff, legendary archmage Shatotto—or more specifically, the memory of Shatotto inhabiting the body of a priestess of the Order of Nald'thal—created this powerful weapon to present as a gift to the black mage who aided her in staving off a cataclysm.



Astrolabe

Designed in the waning years of the Sixth Astral Era, before the resurgence of Sharlayan astrology, the astrolabe was created to provide thaumaturges with a means of monitoring the movements of Hydaelyn and Her twin moons, Menphina and the since-fallen Dalamud. As to why this would have been necessary, few can say.



Makibi

A variation on the Othardian "khakkhara," or "sounding staff," Makibi were crafted for use in ceremonial geomantic rites honoring the first Doman king, Ganen. Believing their exotic design would catch the eye of her customers and see her profits soar, Eorzean entrepreneur Rowena had hundreds of the staves shipped to her emporium in Idyllshire.

Teiwaz

A Skallic relic dating back to Fifth Astral Era Gyr Abania, the ivory dove twined atop the ancient brand was added per the order of an Ala Mhigan king who deemed the relic too mundane for his tastes.

TOMES OF SUMMONING

As mankind's grasp of aetherial manipulation grew stronger, so, too, did its desire to wield larger, more powerful magicks. Incapable of achieving such feats on his own, man sought to supplement his own internal aether by summoning the aether of his surroundings and directing it inward to a point of focus using a series of circles and ley lines. Uncertainty by mages as to exactly how the process worked saw early circles of summoning become overwrought confusions of cryptic symbols and gaudy gimcracks believed to accelerate the flow of aether into the caster who stood at their center. Though grossly inefficient, and ofttimes deadly, the circles did work. It was their size, and the torturous process of preparation, however, that kept their use severely limited.

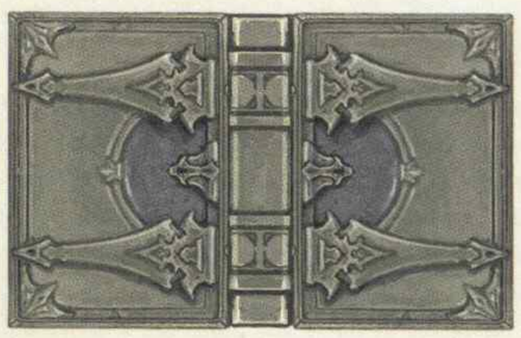
Over time, methods to circumvent these drawbacks were conceived—some mages choosing to paint or tattoo their bodies with circles and runes, others to wear robes elaborately stitched with aetherially conductive thread. By far the most popular solution, however, was the use of parchment scrolls inscribed with the geometries necessary to conduct simple, localized summonings. Before long, stacks of multiple scrolls bound together were being carried off to war, and thus the battle tome was born.

Once mages learned which symbols held the most power, and which were irrelevant, summoning circles were radically simplified. Space no longer an issue, more diagrams could be fit into a tome, along with their incantations. No more were mages burdened with the memorization of the complex invocations required to power their spells, and accidental deaths resulting from miscasts dropped significantly.

Prominent Designs

Grimoire

A basic grimoire can consist of anywhere from ten to a hundred pages of parchment or papyrus bound together beneath a tanned leather cover. It is believed that the older the beast that contributed the leather, the better the transmittance of aether from caster to glyph will prove.



Pupil's Book

The leather covers of grimoires are sometimes replaced with substitutes forged of aetherially conductive materials such as mythril or electrum. Proponents of these tomes—including several veteran instructors at the Studium in Sharlayan—claim that they quicken the flow of elemental energies across the pages.

Symbols of Power

Evolute

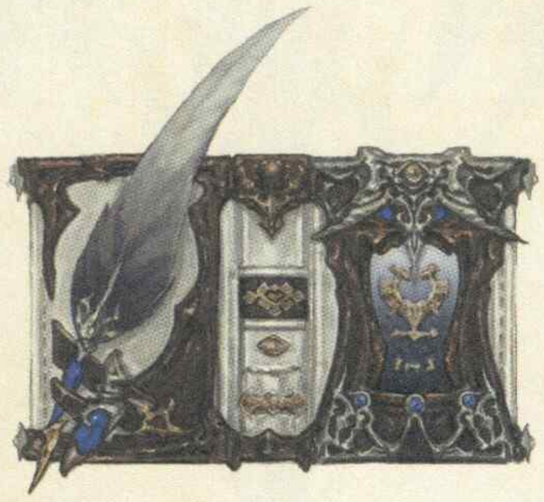
As the effectiveness, potency, and stability of a summoning seal can vary greatly depending on the skill of its author, a streamlined method of crafting grimoires—the diagrams made simpler, the Allagan incantations abridged—was proposed by scribes to promote their efficient mass production. This method would come to be known as "evolute."

Involute

While considerably more difficult to create—a single misstroke possibly rendering an entire symbol powerless—the involute grimoires of the Near East oft prove many times more powerful than the evolute, their detailed glyphs promoting the rapid transduction of elemental energy—a process that helps to facilitate the summoning of familiars of all six aspects.

Far Eastern

When wishing to exert their will over a third party, be it man or beast, the onmyoji of the Far East would traditionally affix to the subject a slip of paper painted with powerful words—the logograms of Hingan script serving as both the incantation and the geometries necessary to invoke the awakening of elemental energies within. By compiling several of these "ofuda" into a tome, the mages are now able to cast their spells quickly and efficiently.



Morkinskinna

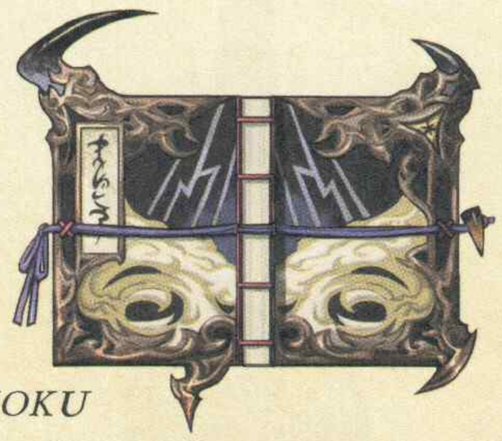
Though it is impossible to tell when exactly the tome was penned, Sharlayan scholars have concluded that *Morkinskinna* was most likely compiled during the Sixth Astral Era's fourth or fifth century. In addition to Allagan incantations and glyphs, the volume contains invaluable information on the myriad wars waged by the ancient Elezen kings ere their arrival in Ishgard.

Ars Almadel

Taken from the satchel of a heretic arrested by a knight of House Haillenarte, Vault scholars were astonished to discover that the lavishly decorated tome was, in fact, a grimoire of Ilsabardian origin. In passing, one of the priests mused that their finding might prove the art of summoning was a tool of Nidhogg's Horde, a bold declaration that caused much stir within the Holy See.

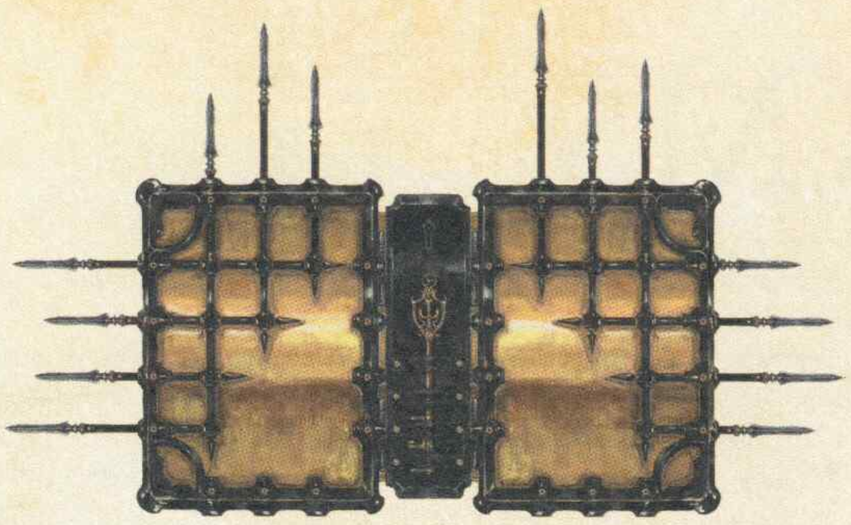
Omnitome

During the Allagan Empire's period of rapid expansion, many nations were quick to realize they could not stand against imperial might, and accepted a fate of annexation and assimilation. Some, however, were too proud to bend to their invaders' will and were thus crushed under the metal boot of progress. All that survives of these cultures are spoils of war such as the omnitome—a stone-faced grimoire upon which a summoner might pen images with her mind.



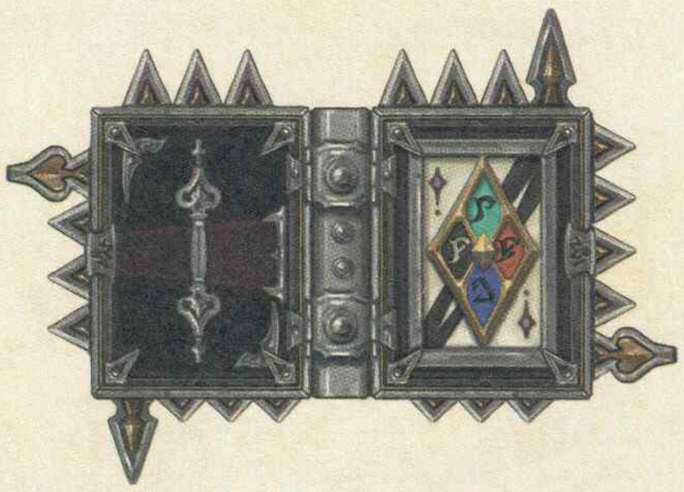
Gogyo Sokoku

Traditionally, Domans believed only five elements to compose all life and matter on Hydaelyn—fire, earth, metal, water, and wood. *Gogyo Sokoku* contains a comprehensive explanation of the five, revealing the secrets of how they oppose one another. It is with knowledge of these "destructive" antipodes that powerful magicks of unmaking might be conceived.



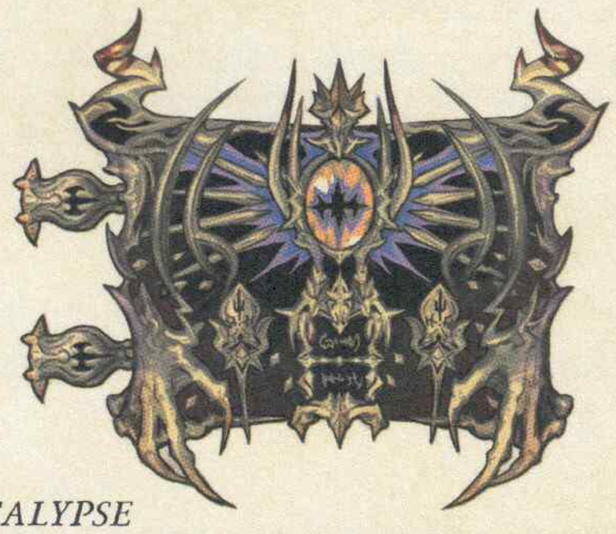
Kinyoshu

One of many items procured in the Far East by Rowena's ravenous army of importers, very little is known about how the grimoire works, save that it does, and does well. Inquiries with its creators—the enigmatic Onishishu—as to the mysteries behind it have all, unsurprisingly, been met with silence.



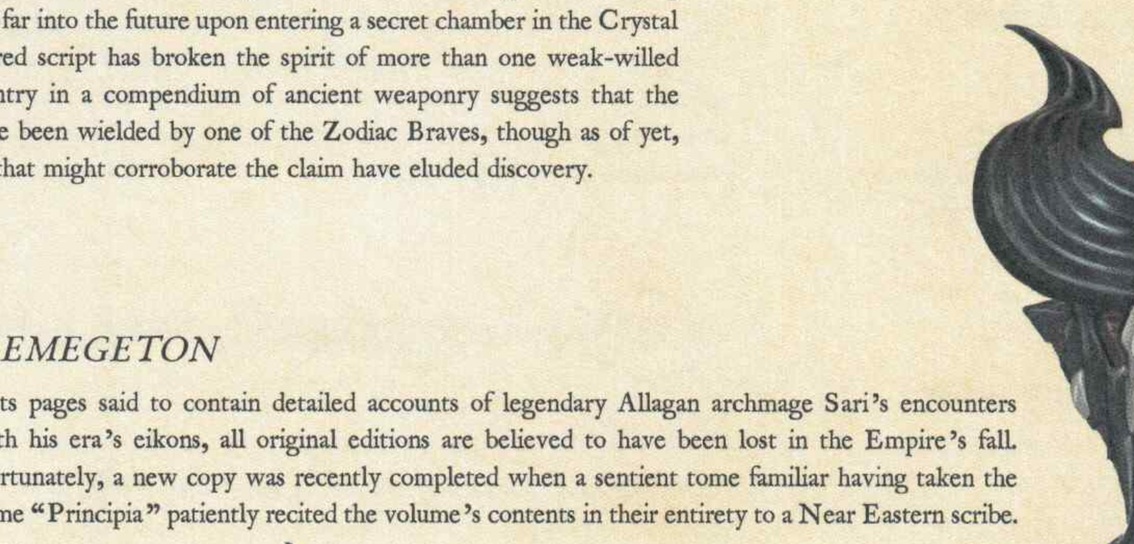
Book of Spades

One of Gerolt Blackthorn's earlier works, this tome was a gift from arcanist Hector Lowe to his older sister Pallas upon their arrival in Limsa Lominsa from the south seas. As was stipulated in her last will and testament, the entirety of Pallas's estate was transferred to Mealvaan's Gate following her death. Her effects, including the *Book of Spades*, were eventually sold at auction to pay for the burial.



Apocalypse

A firsthand account of the world's end penned by a nameless vagabond claiming to have journeyed far into the future upon entering a secret chamber in the Crystal Tower, its ciphered script has broken the spirit of more than one weak-willed reader. A lone entry in a compendium of ancient weaponry suggests that the grimoire may have been wielded by one of the Zodiac Braves, though as of yet, additional works that might corroborate the claim have eluded discovery.

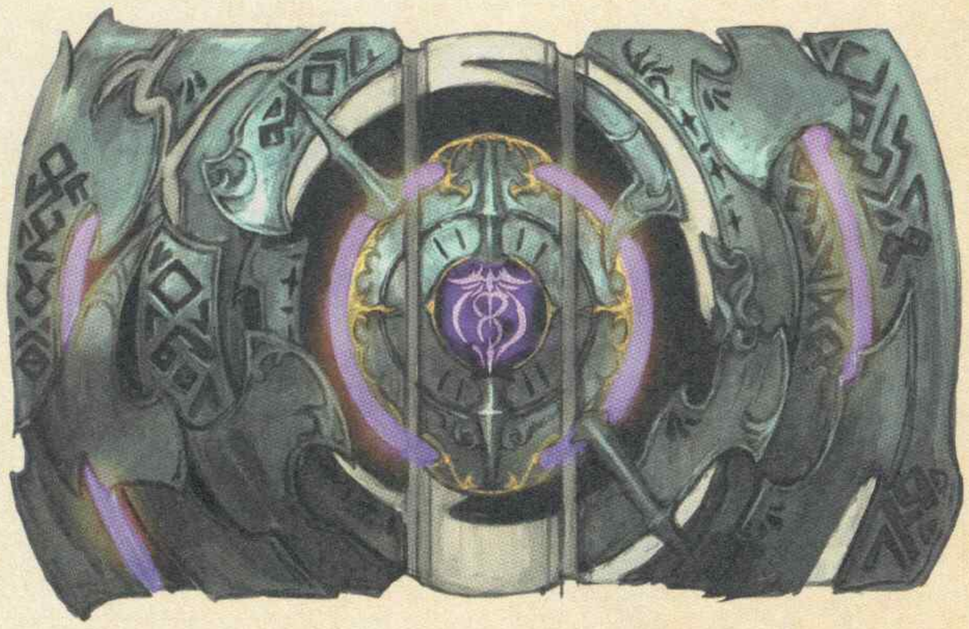


Lemegeton

Its pages said to contain detailed accounts of legendary Allagan archmage Sari's encounters with his era's eikons, all original editions are believed to have been lost in the Empire's fall. Fortunately, a new copy was recently completed when a sentient tome familiar having taken the name "Principia" patiently recited the volume's contents in their entirety to a Near Eastern scribe.

Aurora

For many years the pride of Ala Mhigo's literary collection, the lavish tome that took a Near Eastern monastic three and a half moons to transcribe was nearly lost when a company of stubborn sappers fighting the Garlean invasion chose the royal library to make their last stand. *Aurora* is but half of a two-volume set, its pair the equally arresting *Ethica*.



Mimesis

Its title meaning "imitation," *Mimesis* was created by Gerolt Blackthorn and Ardashir Balyk to house the ersatz life force they dubbed "anima." The soulstone wherein the animate energy is stored is fastened to a clasp in the center of the tome's metal spine.

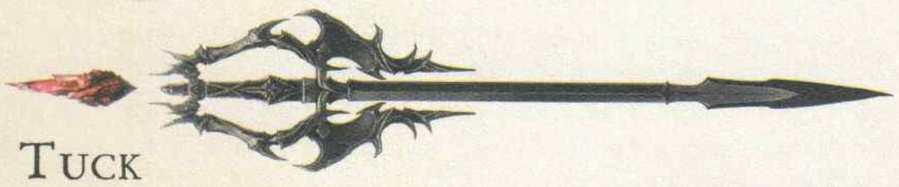
DUELING ARMS

Before the realm's armorers perfected methods of pounding iron into donnable plate, soldiers clad themselves in heavy jackets of linked iron chain. As traditional edged blades would merely glance off the protective garb, thin, edgeless blades with pointed tips were conceived to drive through the chains and skewer the man beneath. These early rapiers were carried into battle by many a chivalrous warrior as supplements to their longswords—a practice that, over time, became seen as symbolic of knighthood itself.

As the blades' relatively diminutive size did not serve as a cause of burden for their bearers, knights would wear them at all times, making them the first weapon in hand were one forced to defend his honor. It was thus that the items became associated with dueling, and both rules of noble engagement and the traditional techniques of fencing slowly took form.

It is interesting to note that, despite distinct Elezen origins, the rapier never became popular in the city-state of Ishgard. This is believed to be a result of the nation's long history of strife with dragonkind—weapons with far more reach, such as the lance, being valued over those better suited for close combat. It was instead the Elezen of Amdapor and Mhach who fled to Gyr Abania following the Fifth Astral Era's great flood who introduced the dueling weapons to the region's red mages and oversaw the eventual addition of the trademark aetherial mediums to their hilts.

Prominent Designs

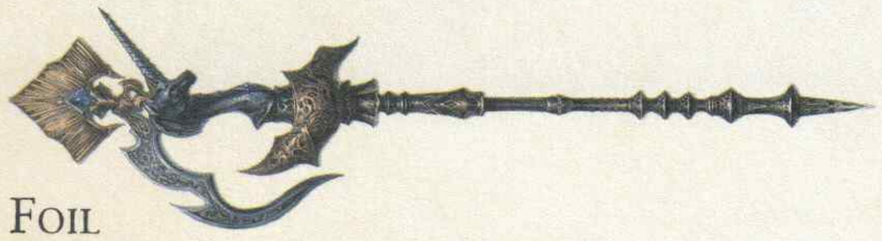


Tuck

A secondary weapon used by cavalry knights after dismounting, the dual-edged blade's foible is widened and reinforced to improve its ability to puncture the metal links of chainmail.

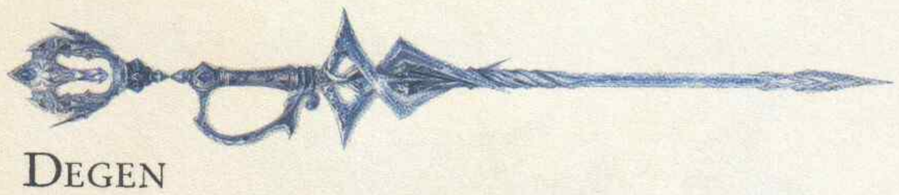
Rapier

The rapier is what might be considered the extreme evolution of the dueling arm, its thin blade and insubstantial weight (usually less than three ponzes) considered a liability in all but affairs of honor. Unsuitable for grasping while equipped with bulky gauntlets or gloves, the hilt keeps a wielder's hand from harm by employing a complex web of curving arms, looping side rings, and plunging bows.



Foil

Once reserved for use in training—their blades blunted or rounded to prevent serious injury—knights became so adept with the weapons, adapting their fighting styles to take full advantage of the foil's pointed tip, that many began carrying them into battle along with their broadswords and lances.



Degen

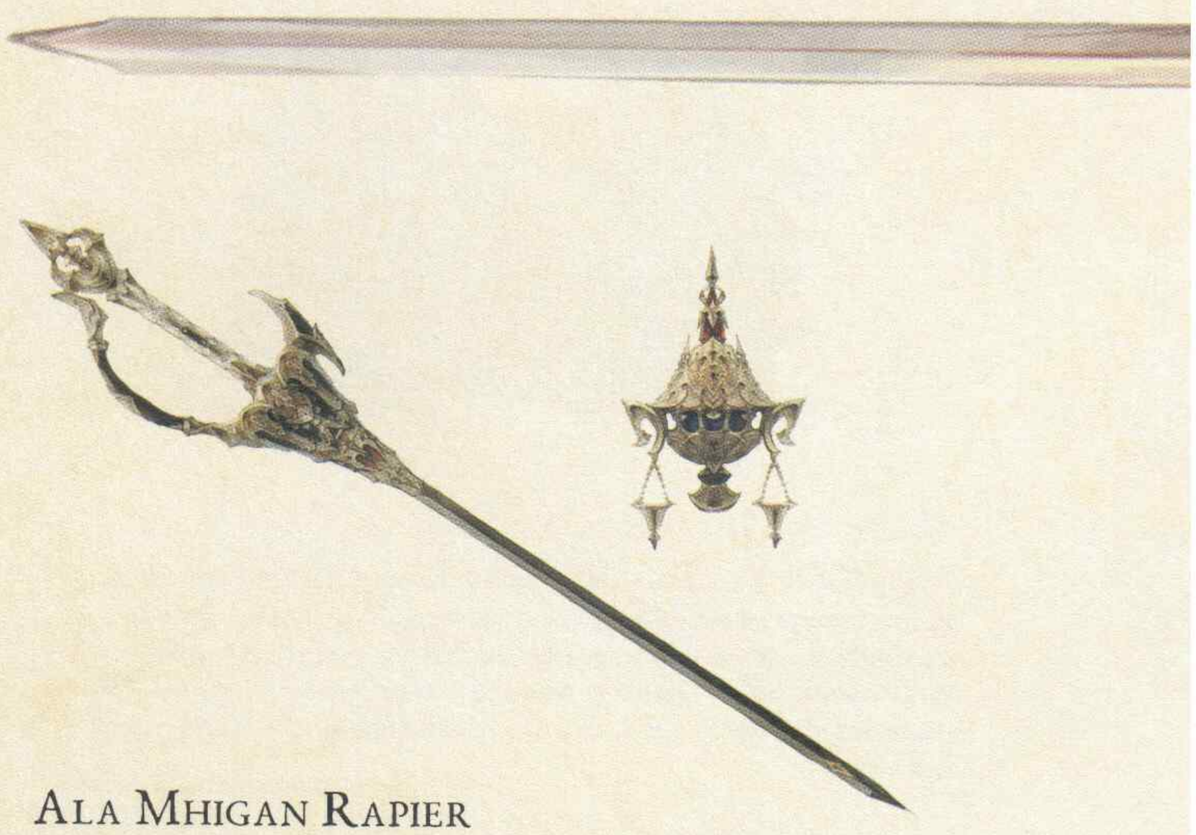
Another variation on the tuck and rapier, the degen's blade is twisted from the ricasso all the way down the length of its forte before straightening to a dual-edged foible fortified at the tip with a flared arrowhead-like point.

Smallsword

With its flat, tapered blade of twin edges, the smallsword bears a much closer resemblance to a short sword than it does a rapier; however, its widespread acceptance by the realm's red mages has seen it recently recategorized as a dueling arm.

Far Eastern Blades

Beyond daggers and the samurai's wakizashi, short-bladed swords are scarce in the Far East—edgeless ones, almost nonexistent. An influx of Western adventurers in the region, however, has increased the demand for rapier-like weapons, and the unique steel-folding techniques employed by Hingan blacksmiths are well suited for producing works that will withstand the force of an armor-piercing thrust.



Ala Mhigan Rapier

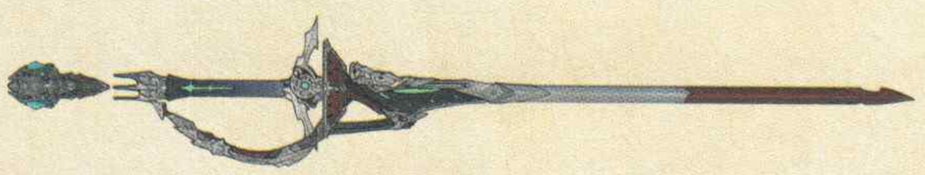
The Ala Mhigan struggle for freedom from the Empire's shackles is rife with tales of young maidens, some having seen not a dozen summers, taking up the blades of their fallen mothers and fathers. This rapier was crafted to honor those brave children, the scales serving as the weapon's medium engraved with the slogan of the Resistance, "Liberty or Death."

Verdun

In a time when men began turning their backs on their former allies, the dragons, one knight stood to defend his wyrm companion against a mob of bloodthirsty priests. While successful in fending off the attackers, the knight eventually succumbed to his wounds and passed in the embrace of the one he swore to defend. To honor this sacrifice, the dragon breathed white-hot flames over his friend, transforming the body's remaining aether into a crimson jewel which he then affixed to the knight's blade.

Mokusa

A unique smallsword named for the legendary line of Hingan blacksmiths who conceived its design. It is widely believed that the blacksmiths of the Mokusa clan were the first to abandon traditional straight-edged blades for ones curved. Lesser smiths, however, could rarely duplicate the complexity of most Mokusa creations, a single curve proving the limit of their talents, and thus did the standard katana retain its simple shape.

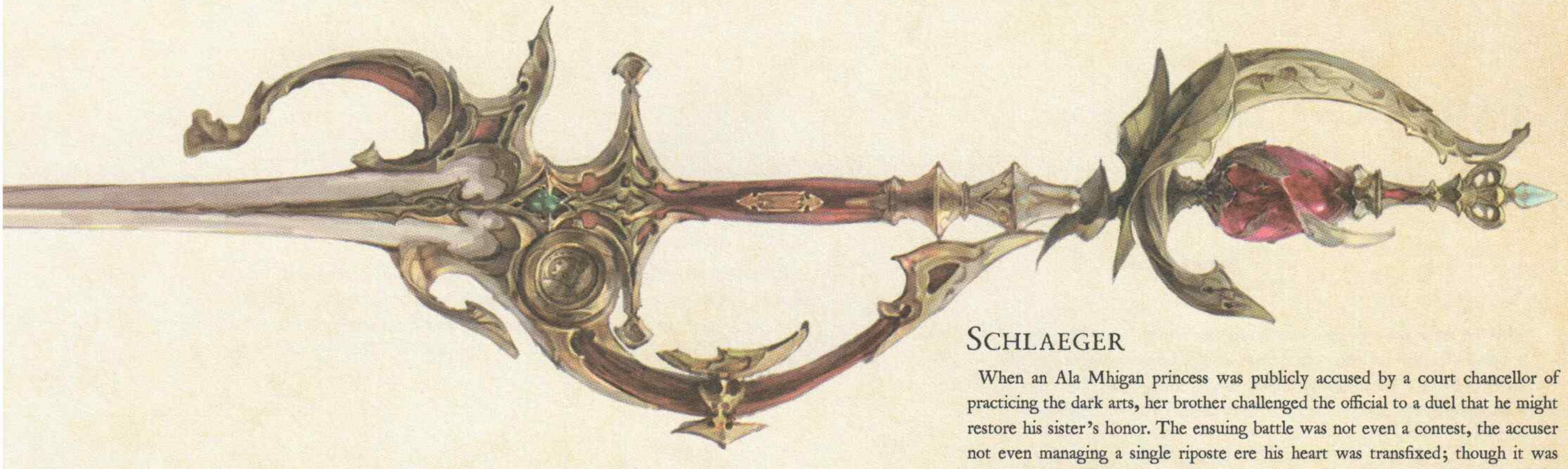


Scaevan Magitek Hanger

Painstakingly designed and crafted by imperial-terror-turned-Ironworks-engineer Nero Scaeva to impress his new employers, the sword is cluttered with countless components of ingenious, yet unnecessary gadgetry, from a detachable blade and hilt, to a retractable knuckle-bow.

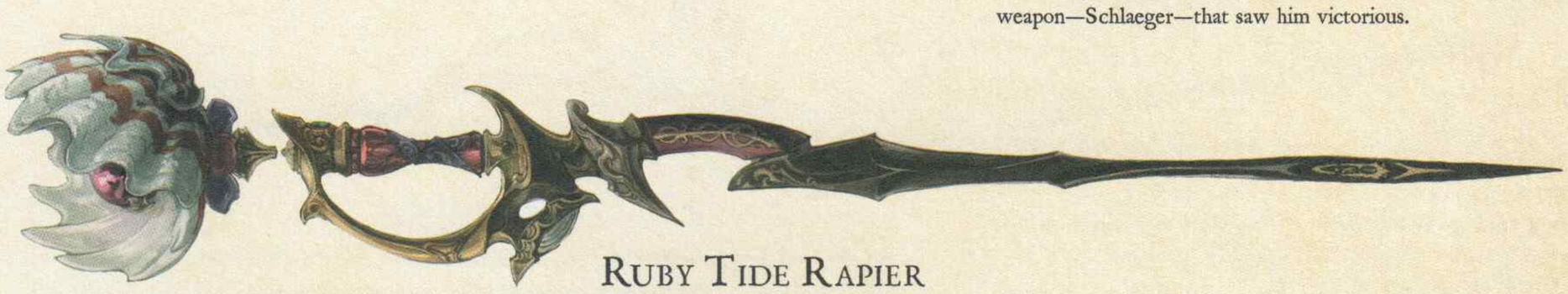
Chicken Knife

An unfortunate name for a weapon with an unfortunate history, it is believed the first chicken knife was wielded by a cowardly thief who would purposefully let fall a child's doll to the cobbles, and then stab his victims in the back while they stooped to collect the item. Why the blade has seen a recent resurgence in popularity amongst red mages is unknown.



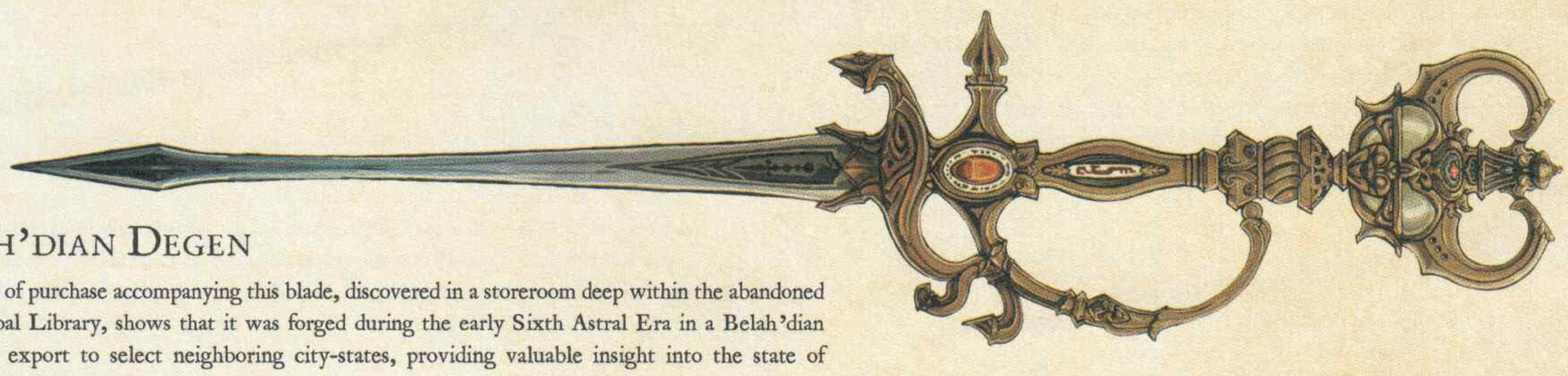
Schlaeger

When an Ala Mhigan princess was publicly accused by a court chancellor of practicing the dark arts, her brother challenged the official to a duel that he might restore his sister's honor. The ensuing battle was not even a contest, the accuser not even managing a single riposte ere his heart was transfixed; though it was more the prince's sixteen summers of training in swordplay than the quality of the weapon—Schlaeger—that saw him victorious.



Ruby Tide Rapier

Following his discovery of a book of fantastical tales in the wreckage of an Eorzean trading galley, a blacksmith of Sui-no-Sato set out to forge a blade similar to the one boldly brandished by the swashbuckling red mage portrayed in the stories. While the result is most certainly nothing akin to what the author of said tales imagined, the weapon is an astonishing display of skill nonetheless, and many students of the red arts have since traveled to the underwater village, seeking to procure one of their own.

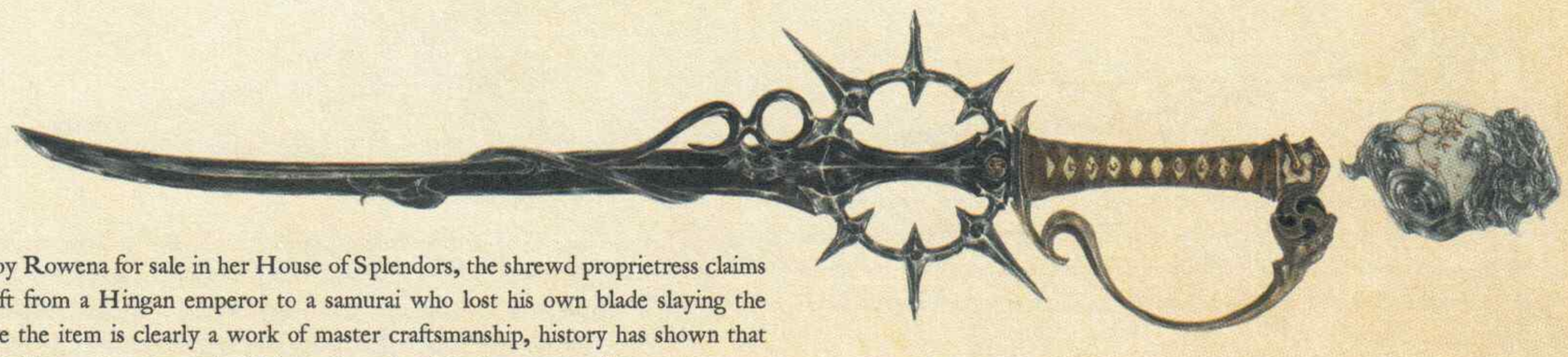


Belah'dian Degen

A receipt of purchase accompanying this blade, discovered in a storeroom deep within the abandoned Great Gubal Library, shows that it was forged during the early Sixth Astral Era in a Belah'dian smithy for export to select neighboring city-states, providing valuable insight into the state of international relations at the time.

Lost Allagan Foil

Dubbed a foil for its lack of a distinct edge, the weapon was created using technology and techniques discovered within an Allagan tomestone decrypted by the Garlond Ironworks. Both its grip and blade are forged from a special alloy that draws upon one's internal aether and transfers it seamlessly to the tip.



Shishio

A relic brought back by Rowena for sale in her House of Splendors, the shrewd proprietress claims that the blade was a gift from a Hingan emperor to a samurai who lost his own blade slaying the evil auspice Nue. While the item is clearly a work of master craftsmanship, history has shown that Rowena is wont to embellish an item's origins if she believes it might increase profits.

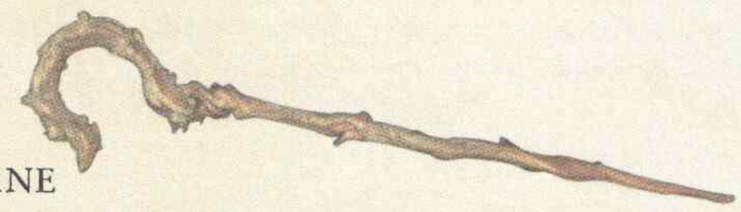
CONJURERS' ARMS

At a glance, there appear very few outward differences between those arms wielded by practitioners of the black arts and those of the white. Indeed, the origins of the latter lie in the rudimentary aetherial mediums developed by the shamans of the Second Astral Era. However, early mages were quick to realize that certain types of magicks—predominately those concerned with healing and the cleansing of impurities—did not resonate well with the heavily aspected elemental baubles affixed as focal nodes to brands and cudgels. Unlike black magic, which draws upon the invisible rivers of energy that flow all around us, white magic is engendered via a connection betwixt the caster's internal aether and her surrounding environment, and thusly items still attuned with nature are oft better suited at harnessing its power. Budding boughs, swollen taproots, fruiting fungi—all these have been recognized to stimulate aetherial conductivity, resulting in enhanced healing potency. So much so, in fact, that very rarely are the items altered or modified from their original forms.

Prominent Designs

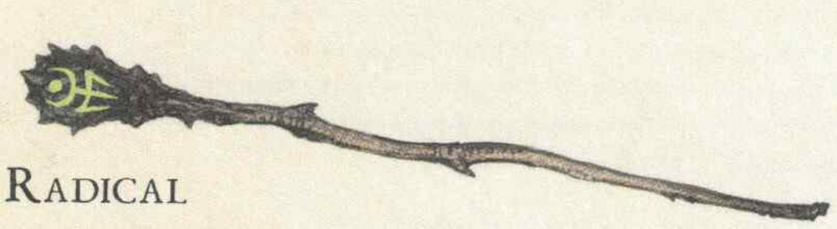
Wand

To the untrained eye, most wands can seem naught more than the fallen limbs of storm-stricken sentinels; yet, despite being far removed from the trunks which once bore them, the boughs practically bristle with power, the life energy within maintained by the generous application of alchemic growth formulae.



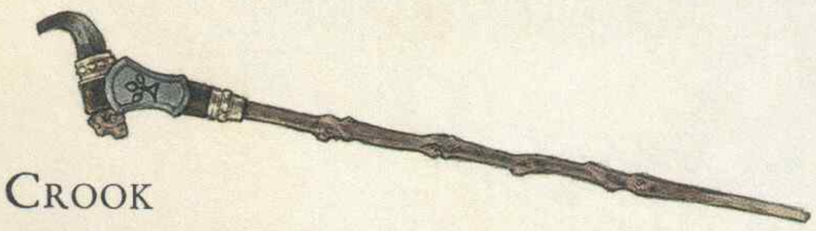
Cane

The roots and boughs of living dryads are oft employed in the crafting of conjurers' canes, though it is believed that only those given freely by the ancient seedkin possess any true power. Conjurers will actively seek specimens that are twisted and bent—the curvature of the crook lending to the medium's ability to accelerate the flow of ambient aether.



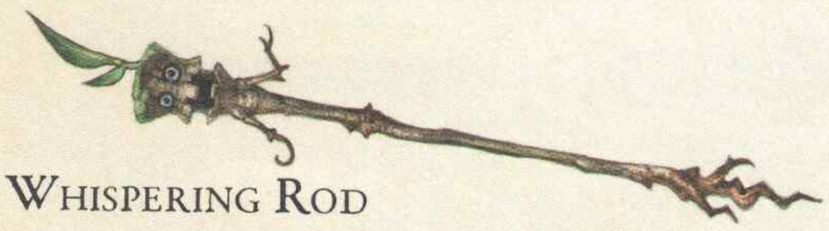
Radical

Another word for the root of a plant extending directly from the base of its stem, a "radical" also represents both a living being's ties to, and dependence on, the land's energies. These crookless canes will, on occasion, be carved with symbols of power or fitted with tribal fetishes to promote elemental acclimatization.



Crook

While not as pronounced as the bow of a cane, most crooks are slightly bent at the head. Hunting horns or stones carved with arcane runes can be added to improve aetherial conductivity, but many purists choose to leave the haft bare, claiming that adornment only interferes with the natural flow of aether.

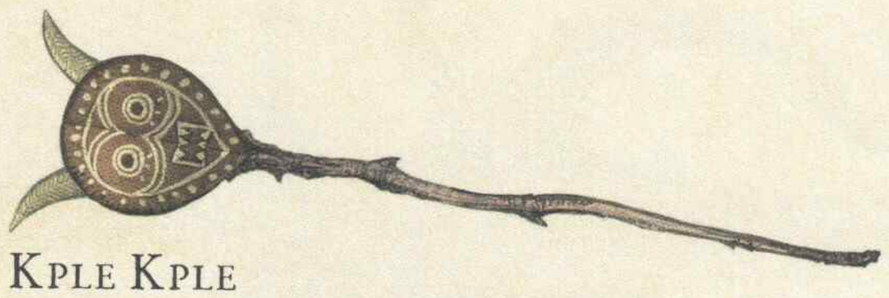


Whispering Rod

Through a long and arduous process of repeated enchantment has this radical been imbued with a sentience closely resembling that of a familiar, though its capacity for basic motor functions is limited to a slight bobbling of the head.

Shakujo

Oft translated into Eorzean as "cane" or "crozier," the shakujo is an aetherial medium carried by the ascetic monks of the Far East, known for their extended meditative wanderings amongst the realm's highest peaks. The means by which the object interacts with ambient aether is much similar to that seen in wands and crooks of Western origin.



Kple Kple

Dissatisfied with Gridania's ruling class, a conjurer of somewhat ill repute fastened a Meracydian mask carved from the body of a worshipper of Sephirot to the living root of a heavenspillar, believing that the resulting crook would grant him the ability to commune with the elementals—a talent reserved for the city-state's Hearers.

Omnirod

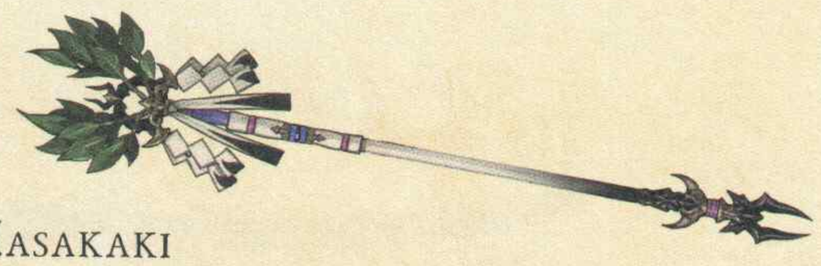
A relic from the same fallen civilization that produced the omnitome, the omnirod fascinated the Allagans, the secret to its construction an enigma that left imperial scholars mazed until the very fall of the Empire. Even today, the wand remains unable to be reproduced, the only ones in existence the ones discovered by the Sons of Saint Coinach at their dig in Mor Dhona.

Yagrush

There was a time when master weaponsmith Gerolt Blackthorn showed little discretion when accepting a new commission, the call of coin (or more precisely, the call of the wine which it could purchase)—proving stronger than the push of his moral compass. Yagrush was the result of one such job, the rod created for a nameless Thavnairian come to Eorzea in search of vengeance.

Alkalurops

One of many ordnance weapons proposed to outfit the newly reestablished Grand Companies of the late Sixth Astral Era, its name can mean either "club" or "shepherd's staff." The petals of the ivory trillium atop Alkalurops will open when the staff is taken up by a conjurer, a rapid accumulation of ambient aether spurring the bud to blossom.



Masakaki

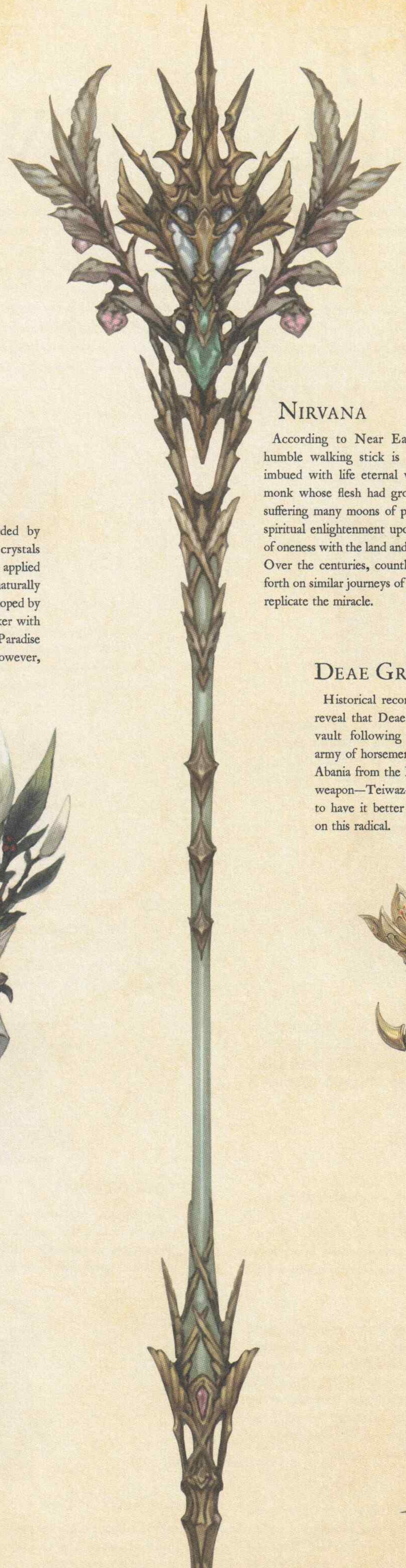
Once used by Far Eastern priests as stands for displaying sacred relics during religious ceremonies, it is only recently that Masakaki have found their way into the hands of spellcasters. The shakujo's head is adorned with twin wands made of cuttings from a broad-leafed evergreen known in Doma and Hingashi as "sakaki."

Aymur

This ancient cane, long guarded by the Conjurers' Guild, features crystals embedded in its haft that were not applied during its creation, but are rather naturally occurring stones that became enveloped by the wood as the bough grew thicker with each new spring. The rare Bird of Paradise feathers affixed atop the crook, however, are a recent addition.

Mistilteinn

Despite an estimated age of over a thousand summers, the sprig of mistletoe espoused to this rod of unknown origin remains unwithered. Several theories have been put forward in an attempt to explain this remarkable phenomenon: some scholars claiming the leaves are expertly preserved by embalming techniques long forgotten, while others argue the plant's roots were placed into a formula of dragon's blood before application.

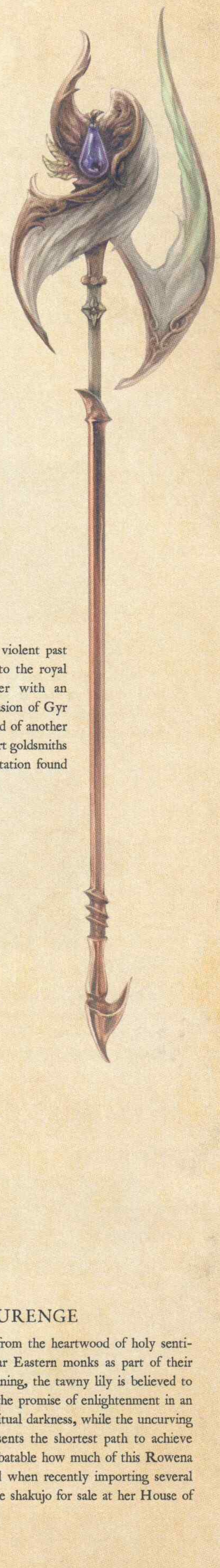


Nirvana

According to Near Eastern legend, this humble walking stick is said to have been imbued with life eternal when its owner—a monk whose flesh had grown mortified after suffering many moons of penance—discovered spiritual enlightenment upon achieving a state of oneness with the land and its myriad energies. Over the centuries, countless others have set forth on similar journeys of the soul, seeking to replicate the miracle.

Deae Gratia

Historical records of Ala Mhigo's violent past reveal that Deae Gratia was added to the royal vault following a bloody encounter with an army of horsemen attempting an invasion of Gyr Abania from the Near East. The head of another weapon—Teiwaz—was altered by court goldsmiths to have it better match the ornamentation found on this radical.



Byakurenge

Carved from the heartwood of holy sentinels by Far Eastern monks as part of their ascetic training, the tawny lily is believed to represent the promise of enlightenment in an age of spiritual darkness, while the uncurving haft represents the shortest path to achieve it. It is debatable how much of this Rowena understood when recently importing several cases of the shakujo for sale at her House of Splendors.

TOMES OF SCHOLARLY KNOWLEDGE

Following an evolutionary arc similar to that of conjurers' arms, the symbols of power employed in battle scholars' magicks can also be traced back to the early Second Astral Era. However, as the glyphs were not required to weave forth and maintain large quantities of elemental energy, they were much less complex, making them infinitely more accessible to the common mage.

Throughout the Third Astral Era, Allagan arithmeticians perfected the geometries used in spellcasting, eliminating redundancies and streamlining proofs until a highly efficient table of glyphs was established, having independently evolved from signs of summoning. Unfortunately, this knowledge was forsaken after the fall of the Allagan civilization pending its rediscovery in the Fifth Astral Era—stone carvings, wall paintings, even the very layouts of ancient temple ruins all providing hints as to the design of basic geometries. Once these hints had been properly deciphered, it was not long before the peoples of Amdapor, Mhach, and beyond were restoring and reinventing diagrams that had flourished more than a thousand summers past. The tiny nation of Nym successfully incorporated these equations into military tactics that saw its rise to political giant, despite having but a fraction of the population of its neighbors, while tribes of the south seas silently applied their extensive research on advanced mathematics into the development of what would eventually become arcanima.

Prominent Designs

Codex

A codex is, for the most part, no different from a grimoire—from the materials used in its cover and ink to the binding and blessing techniques required to complement and enhance its aetherial properties. Only upon viewing the cants and glyphs contained within its pages do the twin schools' deviations become apparent.

Picatrix

Some battle scholars avouch that binding their tomes in wood instead of leather better attunes the volumes to nature's whims, allowing for increased efficiency during the conveyance of aetherial energy into a spell. There is much debate, however, regarding which variety of wood is the most effective in achieving this.

Symbols of Power

Evolute

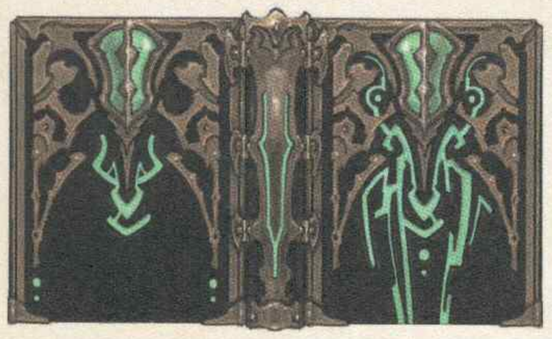
Most glyphs found in a battle scholar's codex will consist of simple, yet concise diagrams composed of lines and circles. These "evolute" geometries are complemented by extensive passages on Nymian military science and the art of warfare.

Involute

Nymian and south seas geometries which have been transcribed using ornamental graphemes of Near Eastern origin are known in scholarly circles as "involute." In these complex renditions of basic symbols, the very placement of each letter, and the length and detail of their flourishes, all contribute to the potency of the resultant spells.

Far Eastern

The bastard child of Hingan calligraphy and Doman aetherial sealing, Far Eastern codices contain glyphs penned with both black and crimson inks. An inaccurate ratio of the two is believed to greatly upset the effectiveness of the resulting incantations.



Allagan Grimoire of Healing

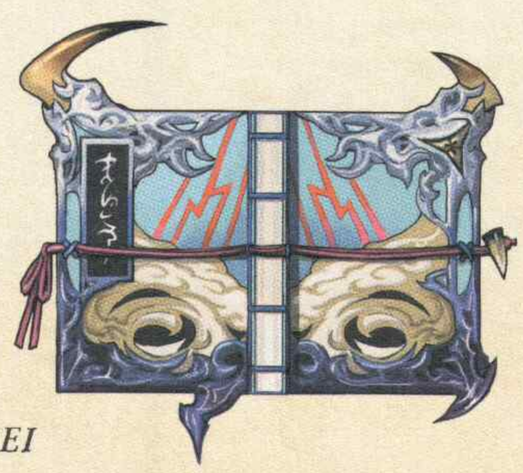
Found by an adventurer exploring the flotsam of the lesser moon Dalamud, this ancient artifact of the Allagan Empire can project onto its pages the knowledge of he who possesses it. In the hands of a trained battle scholar, it can prove a powerful ally, while in the hands of the unenlightened, it will appear naught more than a collection of empty parchment.

Ars Notoria

One of two volumes discovered on a heretic captured and imprisoned by a knight of House Durendaire on a routine sweep of the tunnels in the Nail. Vault scholars concluded from the gilt lettering adorning the tome's cracked leather cover that the book was not bound in Eorzea, but in faraway Ilsabard.

Cognitome

Completing a bigeminal set with the omnitome, the cognitome was thought by the Allagans to have been a collection of knowledge, as opposed to the omnitome being a collection of "unknowledge" or "unmaking." This hypothesis, however, was never proven, the Empire having slain all the inhabitants of the small nation where the books were pillaged.



Gogyo Sosei

Domans traditionally believed that five, not six, elements—fire, water, earth, metal, and wood—existed in a delicate balance, each contributing to the creation and destruction of another. Whereas the *Gogyo Sokoku* describes the conquering cycle which can be used to engender ruinous magicks, the *Gogyo Sosei* details the generative cycle that can be applied to promote healing.

Last Resort

"Legend tells us a grimoire such as this was passed down through the mages of Nym. Indeed, Golbas Rombas, the hero who saved his people from the floods of the Sixth Umbral Calamity, was known to rely upon it as his secret weapon."

Renowned Hannish alchemist, Jalzahn Daemir

Tetrabiblos

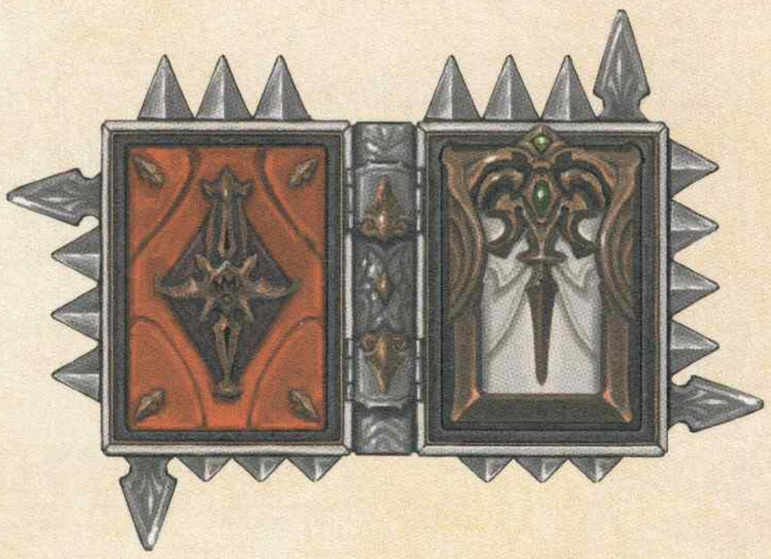
Bereft of any better ideas, Gerolt Blackthorn and Ardashir Balyk borrowed the title of an ancient treatise on the philosophy and practice of astrology for their anima-housing creation. The binding has been outfitted with myriad supplementary gadgets and compartments to assist the volume's owner on her adventures.

Ethica

Each transcribed in the same two seasons as its counterpart, *Aurora* and *Ethica* are almost exactly identical save for their subject matter—the former delving into the mysteries of summoning, the latter dealing with matters of military strategy originating in Fifth Astral Era Nym.

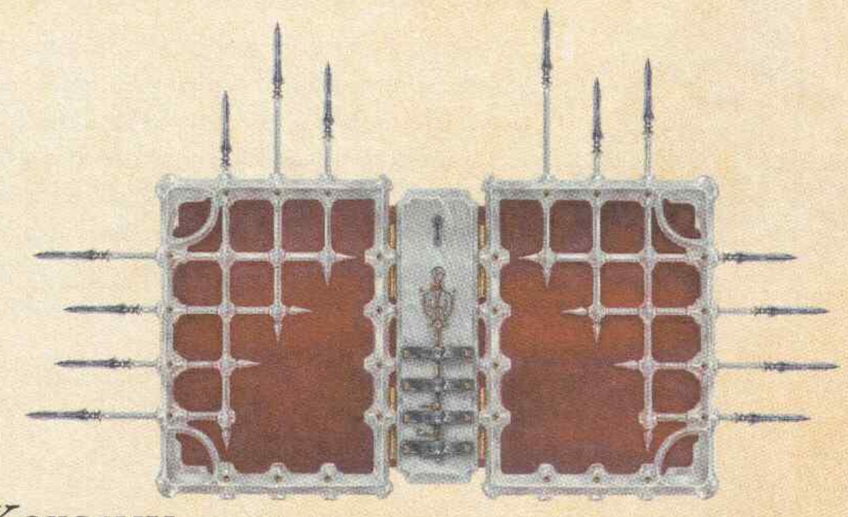
Organum

Discovered in Amdapor Keep amongst the personal effects of a Nymian scholar who was captured while on a covert mission to discover a possible means of reversing the terrible plague that had ravaged his homeland, this leather-bound codex is in remarkably fair condition despite having survived almost sixteen centuries in a sealed coffer.



Book of Diamonds

One of Gerolt Blackthorn's earlier works, Hector Lowe commissioned the Book of Diamonds' creation following the young arcanist's arrival in Limsa Lominsa. Over the remainder of his life, Hector and his sister Pallas would work side by side with Lominsan scholars to improve upon the city-state's outdated aether manifestation techniques, drawing heavily on the teachings of ancient Nym, another of his fields of specialty.



Koyoshu

Another of Rowena's prized Far Eastern collection (available for sale at a reasonable price), *Koyoshu* is a continuation of the epic tale begun in *Kinyoshu*. The logographic glyphs contained within are said to possess powerful healing properties—a feat achieved by means of geomantic seals which work to impede the flow of detrimental aether, thus preventing and even reversing injury.

ASTROLOGIANS' ARMS

In the early years of the Sixth Astral Era, Sharlayan scholar Lewphon began a compilation of the previous era's knowledge in an attempt to accelerate mankind's return to intellectual normalcy following the most recent Calamity-induced fall of civilization. It was during this research that Lewphon devised what would eventually become a new school of astrology, and with it, laid the foundation for the invention of the myriad tools that would be used to channel the aether of the stars.

Since the dawn of time has man looked to the heavens for guidance. Bone fragments carved with ancient calendars depicting solar cycles, detailed cave paintings of constellations both known and unknown, massive stone circles meticulously arranged to follow the movements of both sun and moon; all of these discoveries are proof of mankind's relationship with the realm above. With the advancement of civilization, instruments were created to better understand the boundless night skies and the secrets they hide.

For the most part, these instruments fell into two groups: divinatory and navigatory. Tellurions and torquetums were developed to predict the relative position of planets and their influence on nearby stars, the readings from these paired with foresight scried from arcana to predict one's fate. Conversely, octants, backstaves, and astrolabes provided a means of translating the position of celestial bodies into a virtual map that improved accuracy when plotting long voyages across an endless expanse of ocean. Lewphon surmised that instruments from both groups could be used in tandem with arcane symbols of power to guide extraplanetary aether from the heavens into the vicinity of a caster, allowing for its manipulation into powerful spells. His theories and methods would mark the beginnings of modern Sharlayan astrology.

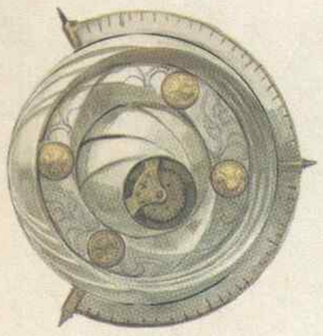
Prominent Designs

Planisphere

This simple star chart consists of two metal discs that rotate on a shared central fulcrum, and depending on their relative positions, can predict the disposition of the heavens for any given day in a complete seasonal cycle. Precious stones representing the six major constellations of Sharlayan astrology are often embedded into the topmost disc to better accentuate the movements of the celestial bodies.

Star Globe

While not a globe in the strictest of senses, the star globe—when fully expanded—features a series of aetherially charged concentric rings which pivot around a central disc representing the moon and Mother Hydaelyn. A skilled astrologian can foretell coming events by interpreting patterns revealed by ring position.

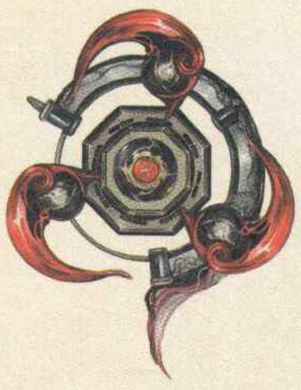


Astrometer

A delicate puzzle of interlocking gears both large and small, the astrometer provides accurate information on the seemingly serendipitous movement of the sun and stars. The complex nature of the instruments has restricted their creation, upkeep, and repair to a handful of goldsmiths scattered across the Three Great Continents.

Torquetum

A fairly recent addition to the modern astrologer's panoply of equipment, the torquetum increases the accuracy of star readings by applying one's current coordinates—horizon, ecliptic, and equatorial—in its calculation of planetary positioning.



Octogenary Mirror

A common divination tool of Far Eastern geomancers, these polished hexagonal plates are in many ways similar to those devices used by the astrologians of Old Sharlayan, despite having been developed tens of thousands of malms apart. Each side of the mirror is said to represent one of the eight cardinal and ordinal directions and conveys a wealth of information, from the position of stars to the strength and location of aetherial flows.

Ephemeris

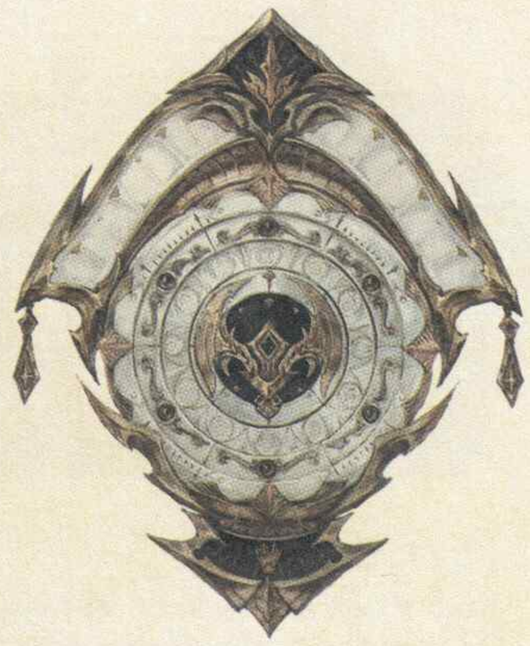
Two independently rotating octogenary mirrors joined together in the manner of a planisphere, the ephemeris is, in essence, a revolutionary union of Western ingenuity and Eastern tradition made possible by newly opened trade routes and an ever-so-slight loosening in Hingan isolationist policies.

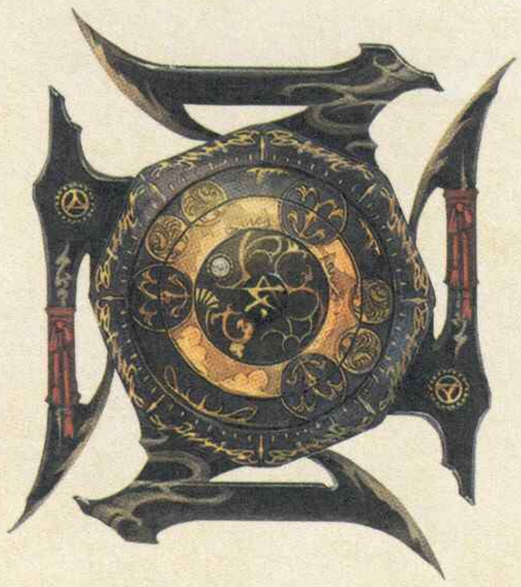
Muspell

Evidence of attempts by Sharlayans to indoctrinate the remainder of Eorzea in their nation's brand of astrology can be found as far back as the previous Astral Era's early sixth century. Within the Holy See's reliquary is contained an ancient astrolabe documented as having being presented to the ruling Archbishop. Information on the bearer of said gift, however, has unfortunately been lost.

Sirius

Throughout his long, and (mostly) illustrious career as a weaponsmith, Gerolt Blackthorn has many a time been forced to suffer the atypical demands of an overly eccentric customer. Such was the case with Sirius, an astrologian's request for a planisphere that looked like the lighthouse Pharos Sirius that proved a veritable nightmare for Gerolt and his apprentices.



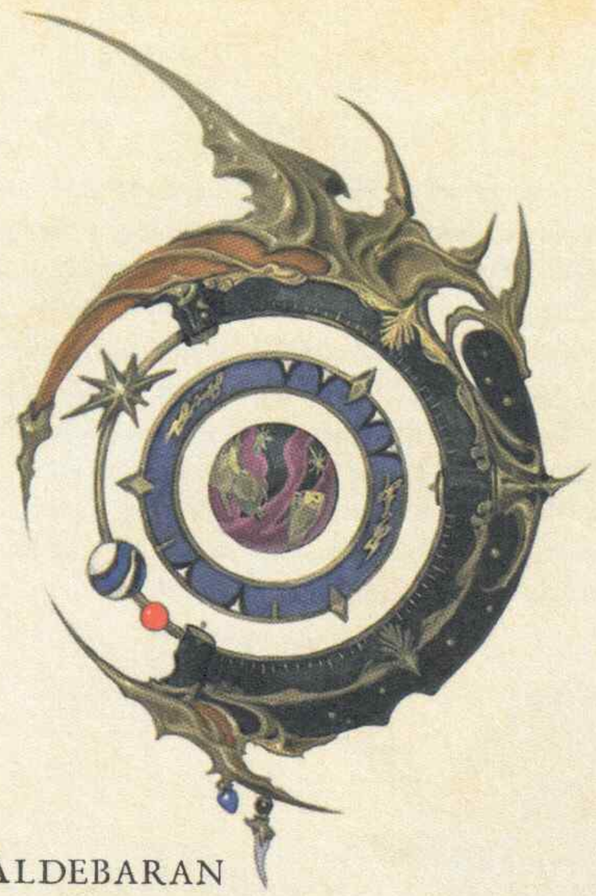


Kontengi

This sleek, bladed planisphere was first conceived when buyers for Rowena's House of Splendors—scouring the Far East for the emporium's next best-seller—commissioned a Doman craftsman to create a weapon that "resembled a ninja's throwing star." Its black lacquering is meant to represent the night sky, the gold inlay, the endless sea of stars.

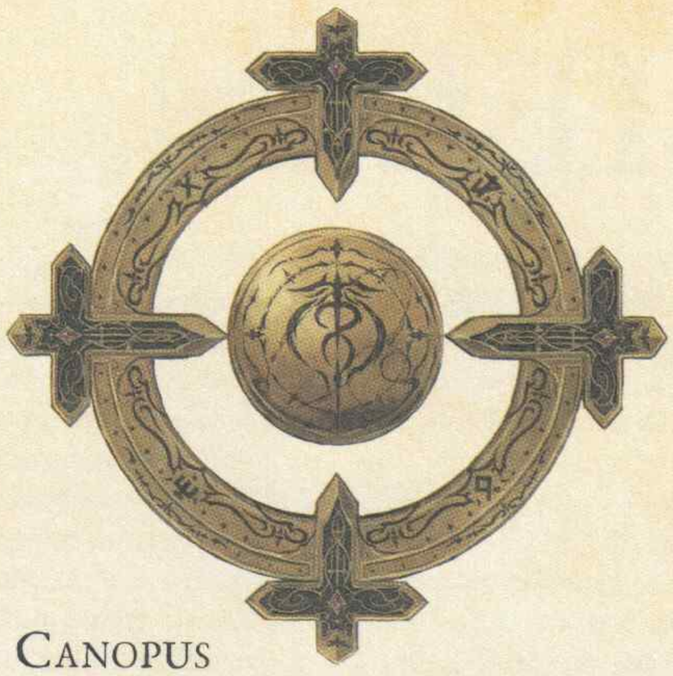
High Allagan Star Globe

If Sharlayan astrology is a product of the Sixth Astral Era, then how, one may ask, was a star globe crafted to specifications of Sharlayan origin discovered within an Allagan starship more than five millennia old? Further research into the Ragnarok has revealed the existence of automated foundries which continue to mass-produce weaponry used by the vessel's internal defense systems. One theory suggests that a globe dropped by a fallen adventurer was copied in these infernal forges.



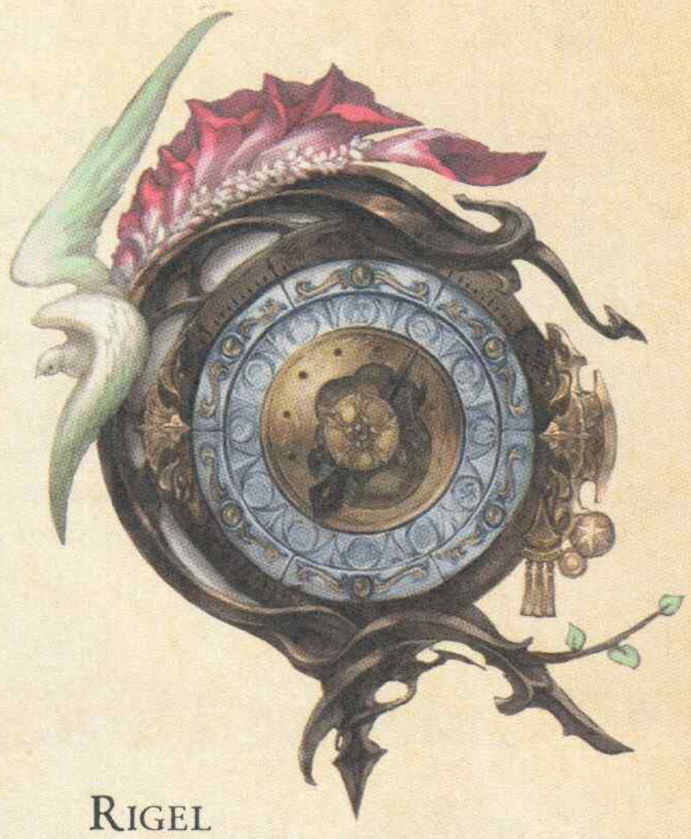
Aldebaran

When unable to sell salvaged items as is, Rowena's House of Splendors will employ its own Diamond Forge to repurpose curiosities from another time into practical commodities. Aldebaran is one such example—a ceremonial Allagan contrivance, its purpose long forgotten, transformed into a modern astrologian's means of armament.



Canopus

The final iteration of Gerolt Blackthorn and Ardashir Balyk's "anima weapon" for astrologians, natural luminescence emitted by the sentient aetherial body contained within is projected from the device, creating a spherical map of the heavens around its core.



Rigel

King Theodoric of Ala Mhigo had this ornate star globe crafted at the behest of his wife, who was known to employ astrology in almost every decision she made, from simple matters such as selecting an outfit, to determining which of her handmaidens might have betrayed her trust. Though, it was ultimately unsuccessful at predicting the ill fate that would befall her and her husband.

Pleiades

One of the many observatory instruments brought to Ishgard more than two decades past by Sharlayan astrologian Rufin Byrde, the globe remained in a state of disrepair for much of the interim until it was restored and presented as a gift from the Vault to the Athenaeum Astrologicum to commemorate the guild-sponsored hosting of a symposium on Old World astrology.

Lewphon's Eye

Father of Sharlayan astromancy and author of *The Five Ages*—a staggering multivolume opus compiling a lifetime's research on history, theology, and astrology—scholar Lewphon is said to have used an inclinometer such as this to make his observations. Since then, all replicas created using the selfsame design have taken the name Lewphon's Eye.

Deneb

In addition to the basic functionality of a standard star globe, this portable planetarium handcrafted by Gerolt Blackthorn and outfitted for anima development by Ardashir Balyk also accurately measures the movement of a rogue star known as Deneb—a celestial body believed by some astrological sects to hold dominion over many of the heavens' more influential objects.

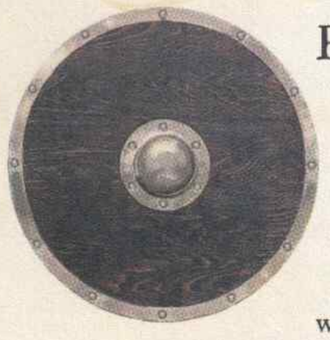
THE SHIELD

Military strategists claim that the best defense is a good offense. The soldiers who fight the strategists' wars, however, will claim the best defense is a good shield. In fact, many will argue that save divine intervention, there is oft no better way to protect oneself from speeding missile, thrust of spear, or fall of axe than a well-placed wall of wood or metal. It is as such that for countless centuries have shields of all shapes and sizes accompanied men and women into battle.

Shields have seen much change through the ages, starting as naught but loosely fitted planks fastened with twine, and subsequently branching off into myriad variations to match the purpose or fighting style of their wielders. Materials range from wood and leather, to heavy bronze and steel; some round to protect the chest and arms, with others large and rectangular to provide cover from deadly storms of fire, stone, and arrows. Some are tooled to be held in the off hand, some to be fastened to arm, wrist, or back. Some are meant to double as blunt weapons, while still others are designed for interlocking to create impenetrable shield walls.

With advancements in metallurgy and smithing have new alloys been discovered, significantly reducing the weight of metal shields. Still, a metal shield can prove a burden for many, adversely affecting mobility, causing fatigue, and hampering one's ability to effectively wield their weapon. Because of this, wooden shields remain popular, though not just for their lightness. Softer woods will give way to ensnare a blade, allowing for an enemy's disarmament. Wooden shields also are better attuned to elemental aether, making them more susceptive to aetherial enchantments which can both physically and magically boost defense.

Prominent Designs



Round Shield

One of the most basic of handheld defenses, a round shield consists of several thick, wooden planks held together with a metal rim and a central metal plate known as a boss. Inexpensive and easy to craft, round shields can be found used in most areas around the realm, save the treeless wastes of Thanalan and Gyr Abania.

Hoplon

The hoplon replaces the round shield's planks of wood for hammered copper or bronze, resulting in increased protection against even the most forceful of blows. The extra weight, however, can make the hoplon difficult to wield, which is why most often their use is reserved for infantry-based shield-wall tactics.

Buckler

As a fighter becomes more adept with her shield, she may find that size no longer holds the importance it once did. A shield need not hide one's entire body if it can be placed in the path of danger with an impeccably timed turn of the wrist. The size and weight of a buckler make it perfect for those who prefer to stay agile on the field of battle, while supplementary spikes and blades make it much more than just an instrument of defense.

Targe

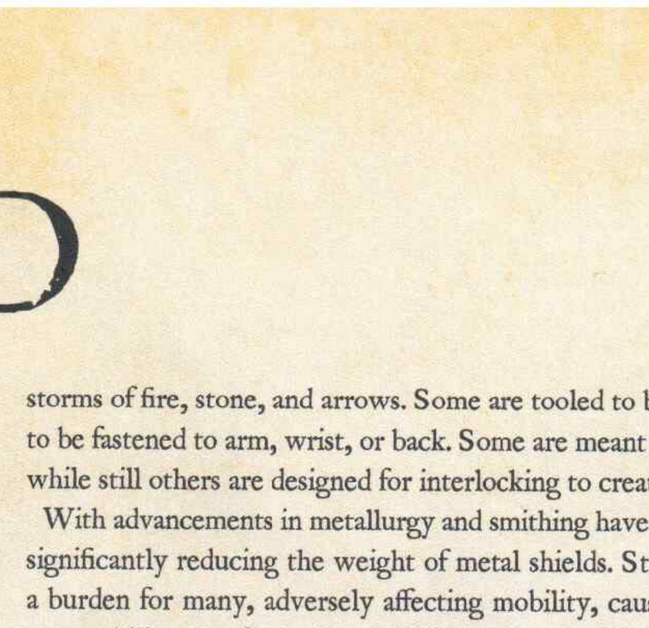
By employing a face of hardened beast- or scalekin leather, the size of a targe can be increased to reach from shoulder to shin without encumbering its wielder. A metal boss and plentiful studding is oft applied to the shield to offset the loss of protection against piercing damage.

Kite Shield

The kite shield earns its name from its tapered, teardrop shape, said to resemble a pinion or kite. A preferred choice amongst knights, the shield's face is oft decorated with an elaborate coat of arms, telling the tale of its wielder's house or allegiance.

Scutum

These tall, rectangular shields are some of the heaviest in existence; however, when arranged in an overlapping wall, the resulting phalanx provides almost impenetrable cover, allowing an army to advance unscathed before both a deadly volley of arrows or an opponent's charge.

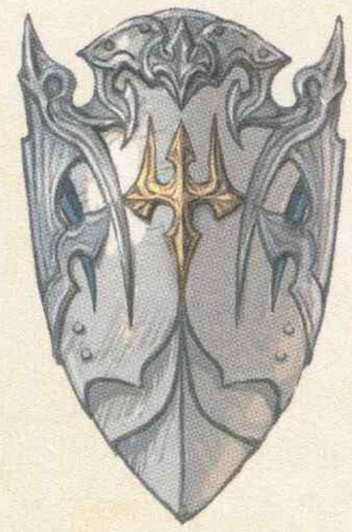


Bladed Lantern Shield

While most certainly imposing, it is not this shield's twin blades that set it apart from similar creations. Within its hollowed interior is an aetherial lantern which, when lit, can emit light through an array of slits on the shield's face. Oft equipped by scouts and sentries who must work under cover of night, the shield comes complete with shutters which can be closed to prevent light from spilling forth and revealing one's position in the darkness, or opened during battle to dazzle the enemy.

Holy Shield

Unlike the traditional kite shields borne by Ishgard's Temple Knights, the Holy Shield does not feature a coat of arms—the unpainted silver a symbol of the Sultansworn's purity of heart and untainted loyalty to the throne.



Svalin

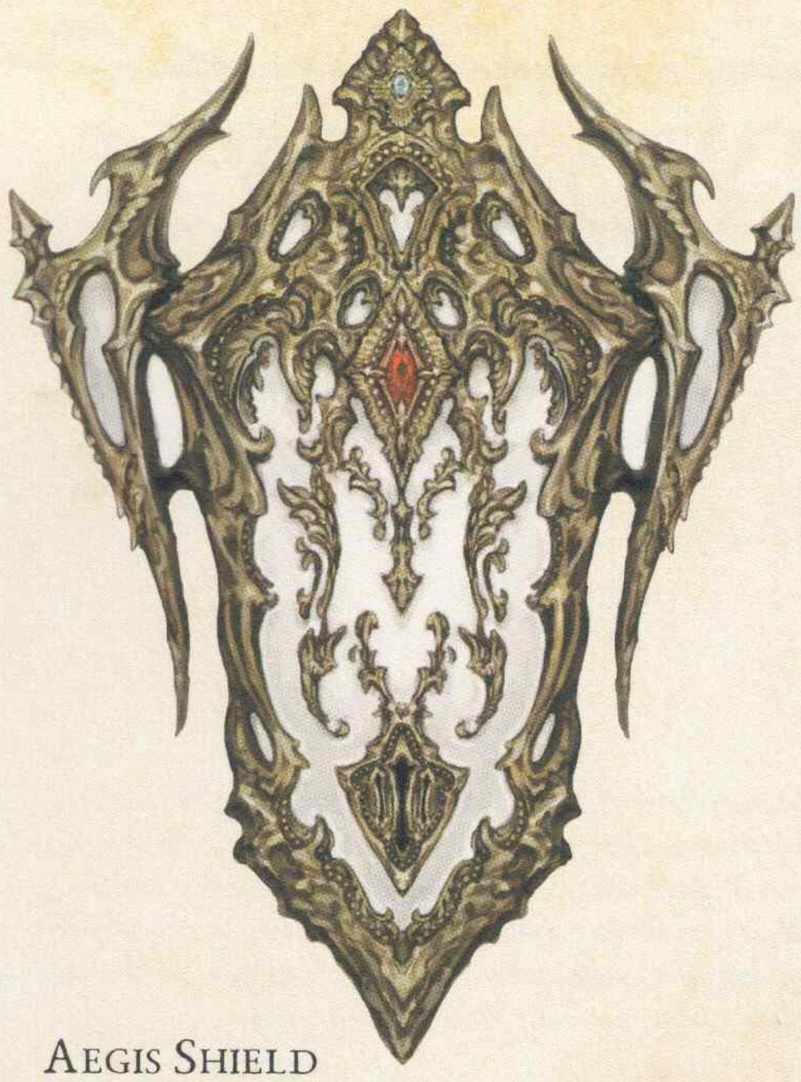
Fabled shield of Ser Moulignauge, member of Thordan's knights twelve, there is no mention of the item outside the *Enchiridion*, its whereabouts lost to the mists of time. For many winters, the Vault actively funded searches for the shield and other so-called holy relics, but since the Church's recent reformation, these endeavors have been placed on permanent hold.

Asuran Greatshield

Inspiration for this greatshield of Doman design was taken from the scaled pauldrons of traditional Far Eastern samurai armor known as "osode." The shield's unique half-crescent body is thought to be effective in turning aside the sharp blows of similarly curved weaponry.

Prytwen

Shield of Caerkympf, grandfather of former Sultansworn captain Solkzagyl Keltnaglsyn, Prytwen was gifted to the Roegadyn along with the legendary creed armor for his leal duty to the sultanate. Its center is painted abyssal blue that none forget how even one beholden to a life of piracy might put his past behind him for a greater good.



Aegis Shield

Pair to the holy sword, Excalibur, legend has that this gilt shield was "unwavering, unyielding, unbreaking" and would forever protect he who stood behind it. The single blood red ruby upon its boss (or umbo) is said to be a symbol of divine strength.

Noct Hoplon

Gerolt Blackthorn has rarely been particular when it comes to a customer's background, provided they have the coin to see a project to its end. So, upon receiving an order for a full set of plate mail and a darksteel hoplon from the pirates of the *Astalicia*, the mastersmith had no reason to decline it. When a payment for materials did not arrive on time, however, Gerolt simply found another buyer for the set in gladiator Heimir the Simple, much to the chagrin of the pirates.

Mitsuba

Sanana, trader in the employ of Rowena's House of Splendors, discovered this beautifully lacquered shield collecting dust in a curio parlor in Kugane. According to the antiquarian who sold it to her, the three-leaf insignia emblazoned on the shield's face signifies that it was once owned by a warrior of Clan Miyumi—a noble house which served Clan Buhen, legendary founders of Suenokuni.

Ritter Shield

Ala Mhigan court records show that when King Theodoric presented one of his wife's personal guards with a sword and the other with a shield, the two maiden knights—each refusing to believe that their liege favored the other more than her—fought a duel to prove their worth. The duel ended in a draw, with both participants succumbing to their wounds several days later. As was the sword, the Ritter Shield, too, was seized by the Garlean Empire following their successful annexation of Ala Mhigo.

Shield of the Twin Thegns

Legend has that this massive shield was wielded by twin brothers who literally fought side by side in battle—one holding the shield with his left hand, the other with his right. A recreation of the shield (albeit for use by a single warrior) was recently crafted by Gerolt Blackthorn and Ardashir Balyk in an attempt to replicate an ancient Allagan technique of imbuing weaponry with aetherial sentience.

ARMOR ACROSS HYDAELYN

As with arms, nations have pursued the research and development of superior armor throughout the history of warfare. Modern "armor" includes not only protective suits of plate and mail, but also garb tailored to provide offensive benefits for mages and the like.

For Disciples of War

The use of defensive gear dates back to ancient times, when combatants would affix wood or leather to their bodies to protect vital organs, though armor in the modern sense did not come about until the advent of bronze. Early metal armor consisted of only a simple plate of hammered bronze for the chest; however, it took on a more recognizable form with the invention of lamellar armor, made of many smaller metal plates strapped together. This concept was further refined to create scale mail and chain-mail, which offered greater defense and superior mobility. Advances in armorcraft then made it possible to cover oneself head to toe in nearly solid metal in the form of plate armor. With several types of armor available, preferences for heavy armor among cavalry and light armor among infantry began to emerge, and over time, armor became increasingly specialized by combat role, giving rise to the many varieties seen today.

Leather Harness

The leather harness was designed for use in the Coliseum, and thus provides only sparse coverage so as to allow those in the stands to observe combatants' muscular forms. Its popularity among Ala Mhigan refugees in Ul'dah indicates that no small number of them have taken to the bloodsands.

Acton

Actons were originally designed to be worn under armor, their thick padding meant to absorb impact and protect the wearer's skin from being rubbed raw. They were eventually modified to be suitable for wearing alone, and are most commonly donned as light armor or craftsman's attire today.

Scale Mail

As the name indicates, scale mail is constructed by overlapping small, flat pieces to resemble the skin of a fish or snake. Because it is comparatively simple to make, it is both inexpensive and prolific—traits that make it popular amongst fledgling adventurers. Though modern suits are most often metal, some are made of materials harvested from particularly hardy scalekin.

Plate Armor

Plate armor encases the wearer entirely in sheet metal, and therefore excels in defense; however, its sheer bulk means that it leaves much to be desired in terms of mobility. For this reason, suits lacking pauldrons and other heavy components have become common, as they can be worn by even those without the strength to equip full plate.

For Disciples of Magic

Defensive properties are not necessarily of primary concern to a Disciple of Magic when selecting battlegarb. Of greater import is each piece's ability to aid in the channeling and manipulation of aether.

As the first to harness aetherial magicks, the shamans of the Second Astral Era were, naturally, also the first to seek out items with the power to enhance their incantations' potency and swiftness. These items—which included branches from sacred trees, the fangs and claws of fell beasts, and crystals and gems imbued with aether—were first used as ritual implements, then developed into the earliest magical arms, armor, and accessories. With the discovery of aetherially conductive silken and metallic thread, weavers began incorporating these materials into fabrics and embroidered designs to create magic-enhancing vestments. As the enduring popularity of flowing robes and cowls attests, full-body garb has remained the ideal attire for magic users ever since.

Robe

The best known example of magical garb, the robe, is also the simplest. Though modern robes are oft bedecked with gems or metal, these are not mere adornments, but rather additional aetherial conduits.

Halfrobe

Though full robes make the most of their wearer's aetherial control by covering the entire body in focus-enhancing material, they are undoubtedly an impediment to movement. Halfrobes and gowns, with their shorter hemlines, were created in answer to this conundrum, and today are available in an ever-increasing array of diverse designs.

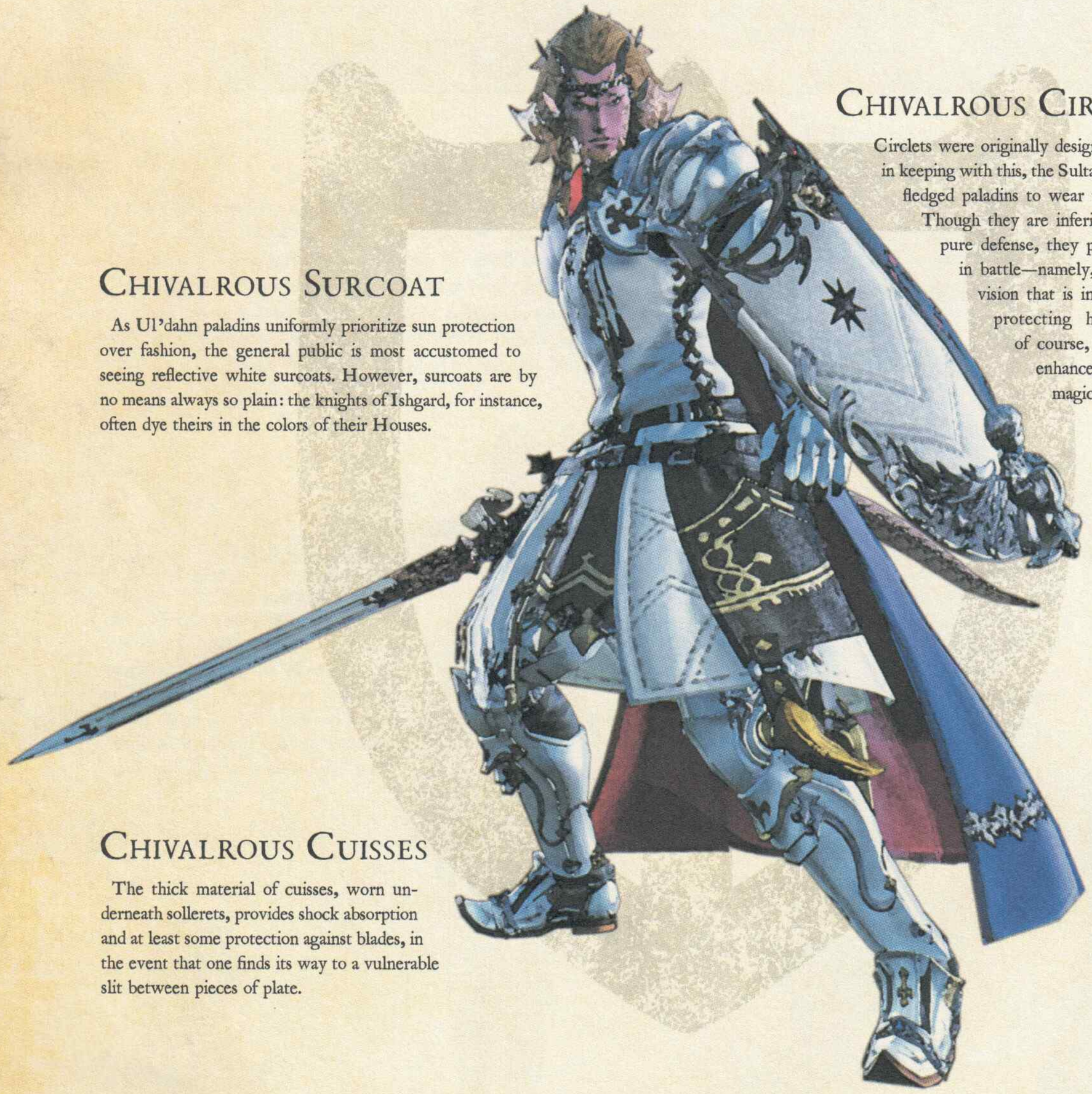
Doublet

Like the acton, the doublet was originally developed as a padded inner layer to be worn under armor, but it has since come into common use as a jacket. The type preferred by the magically inclined does, of course, incorporate materials which promote increased aetherial conductivity.

Shawl

Whatever arcane power a combatant might possess, none can defy the Coliseum's strict code of dress, which demands skin be unburdened by bulky fabrics. Thus are shawls designed to balance the needs of the mage with the desires of the paying customer.

A PALADIN'S PANOPLY



Chivalrous Surcoat

As Ul'dahn paladins uniformly prioritize sun protection over fashion, the general public is most accustomed to seeing reflective white surcoats. However, surcoats are by no means always so plain: the knights of Ishgard, for instance, often dye theirs in the colors of their Houses.

Chivalrous Circlet

Circlets were originally designed for the nobility and, in keeping with this, the Sultansworn permit only full-fledged paladins to wear the traditional headgear. Though they are inferior to helms in terms of pure defense, they provide a unique benefit in battle—namely, the wide-open field of vision that is indispensable to a paladin protecting his companions. That, of course, and any of the myriad enhancements made possible by magicking.

Chivalrous Cuisses

The thick material of cuisses, worn underneath sollerets, provides shock absorption and at least some protection against blades, in the event that one finds its way to a vulnerable slit between pieces of plate.

Form & Function

A Sultansworn's duty is to protect the royal family at any cost. They serve as aegis 'twixt kings and those who would see them harm; and as such, have long favored plate armor for its defensive superiority. The paladins, however, were quick to discover that even the heartiest of men will succumb to Thanalan's harsh sun when limited to the confines of a veritable iron oven. To avoid being baked alive, the brotherhood began wearing long tunics from neck to knee over their armor, reducing the amount of sunlight it gathered. These were eventually refined into the tabards and surcoats we know today.

The modern Sultansworn uniform consists of a tabard over chainmail for squires, and a surcoat over plate for those of rank. On occasion, the paladins can also be seen wearing capes. Those trained by the Sultansworn but not beholden to their oaths do not necessarily have the same environmental limitations, and seemingly wear whatever suits them, up to and including cumbersome suits of full plate.

A WARRIOR'S PANOPLY

Brutal Visor

Though most warriors prefer visored helms, some few choose to wear the visor alone. In either case, the ability to conceal the eyes is paramount, for it prevents other combatants from knowing if and when the warrior has awakened the beast within. That, and protecting his eyes, obviously.

Brutal Lorica

A warrior's body armor is significantly less developed than the full plate preferred in Ul'dah or Ishgard. With a leather-lined metal chestplate as its primary defensive feature, it better resembles the cuirasses and loricae of ages past than it does the streamlined battlegarb of modern day.

Brutal Gauntlets

While a warrior's gauntlets do, of course, protect hands and arms from gashes and welts, they are designed to be weapons in their own right, as well. To this end, some are outfitted with blades, spikes, or even lengths of chain.

Form & Function

Hidden upon Abalathia's Spine, there is a Hellsguard village where the art of the warrior still thrives—its practitioners learning the means to unleash their inner beast and embrace the illimitable power it grants them. To facilitate this freeing of bloodlust, the warrior's armor is traditionally ensorcelled—marked on the inside with a seal of blood harvested from his own kills and enchanted by means known only to shamans of the selfsame clan. The armor itself is commonly made with two materials to which the clan ascribes deep, esoteric meaning: meteoric iron forged over lava, and the pelts of savage animals. They believe both the lava and iron to be imbued with Hydaelyn's life force, and therefore capable of enhancing vitality when worn on one's person. Pelts are incorporated not only as a show of respect for lives taken, but also to heighten a warrior's ability to draw upon the beast within. Thus is a warrior's armor inseparable from the culture that gave rise to his art.

A DARK KNIGHT'S PANOPLY

Abyss Burgeonet

The helm of a dark knight will, traditionally, conceal the entire head. The decorative horns of this particular headgear are said to symbolize the first of their order's righteous loathing of iniquity.

Abyss Cuirass

The many overlapping plates of various shape and size that comprise this cuirass minimize gaps between pieces, while the vicious spikes serve to intimidate any foolish enough to provoke its wearer.

Abyss Flanchard

A flanchard, attached to the thigh, is worn with sollerets to ensure unbroken coverage of the leg. Chainmail is typically layered underneath for additional protection.

Form & Function

The Dragonsong War provided impetus for Ishgard to refine its martial industries—the fields of metallurgy and smithing proving no exception. Ishgardian plate quickly became regarded as some of the finest in all Eorzea, though for centuries it would continue to fare poorly under the onslaught of fang and claw. The See's smiths, believing that the best way to mitigate damage was to avoid it altogether, traded full-body coverage for increased mobility—a sacrifice that afforded swift attacks and uninhibited retreat, the preferred fighting style of the city-state's dragoons. This, however, posed a dilemma for Ishgard's order of dark knights. Seeing as their creed mandates they bear no shield, they required armor resilient enough to fend off more than the occasional glance. After generations of refinement, Ishgardian craftsmen would finally settle upon a design that, while resembling the protective armor of a dragoon, features considerably thicker plate linked with flexible chainmail at the joints.

A MONK'S PANOPLY

Pacifist's Vest

What this vest lacks in cloth, it makes up for in adornment. Its strings of beads and distinctive pattern, traced across the garment in earth tones, are believed to channel aether from the open chakra into one's fists.

Pacifist's Gaskins

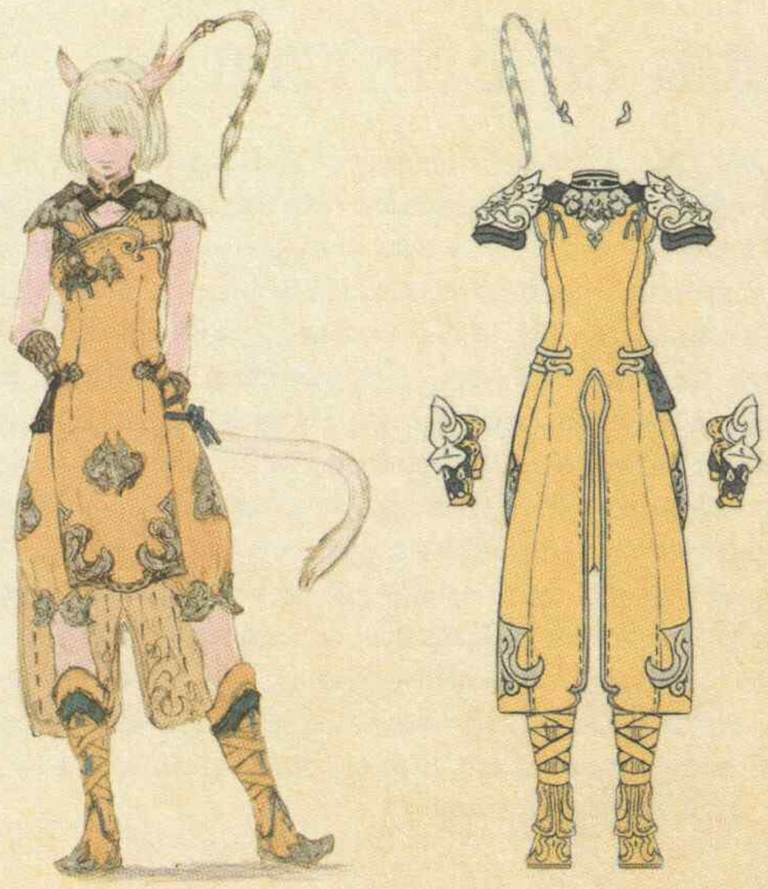
When their order was at its peak, monks of the Fist of Rhalgr would retreat to the mountains to train, matching their strength against the coeurls who dwelled upon the ancient spires. Pelts such as the one adorning the waist of this garment would attest to the might of the wearer.

Pacifist's Armguards

Differences in design between left and right armguards serve as a secondary means of manipulating an enemy's visual focus. The extent of Far Eastern influence on Ala Mhigan culture can be identified through the distinctly Doman rosary wrapped around the right half of this particular pair.

Form & Function

As masters of hand-to-hand combat, the Fist of Rhalgr's monks prized freedom of movement above all else. Accordingly, the modern monk's battle garb incorporates little armor, and what few pieces she wears are meant to boost the efficacy of her blows rather than protect her person. This is not to say that any loose-fitting garb will do, however: the monk's costume is woven from a unique type of silk that allows her to open her chakra with greater ease. Following relatively recent tradition, monks now spin the thread themselves during their training, making use of a technique that imbues it with aetherial energies. Fabric woven with this thread is better suited for chakra manipulation, as it frees aether from ambient constraint, allowing it to flow without impediment. Also typical of the monk's garb are long sashes and panels of loose cloth, which dance through the air as the monk moves, distracting her foe.



A DRAGOON'S PANOPLY

Trueblood Armet

This helm is believed to have been forged when the people of Coerthas lived in harmony with dragonkind. If so, its adornments would have spoken not of the glory of slaying mortal foes, but rather of respect for trusted comrades.

Trueblood Mail

A dragon will undergo a grand metamorphosis at least once during its lifespan, shedding its scales as its body changes. Trueblood mail weds these cast-off scales with metal plate.

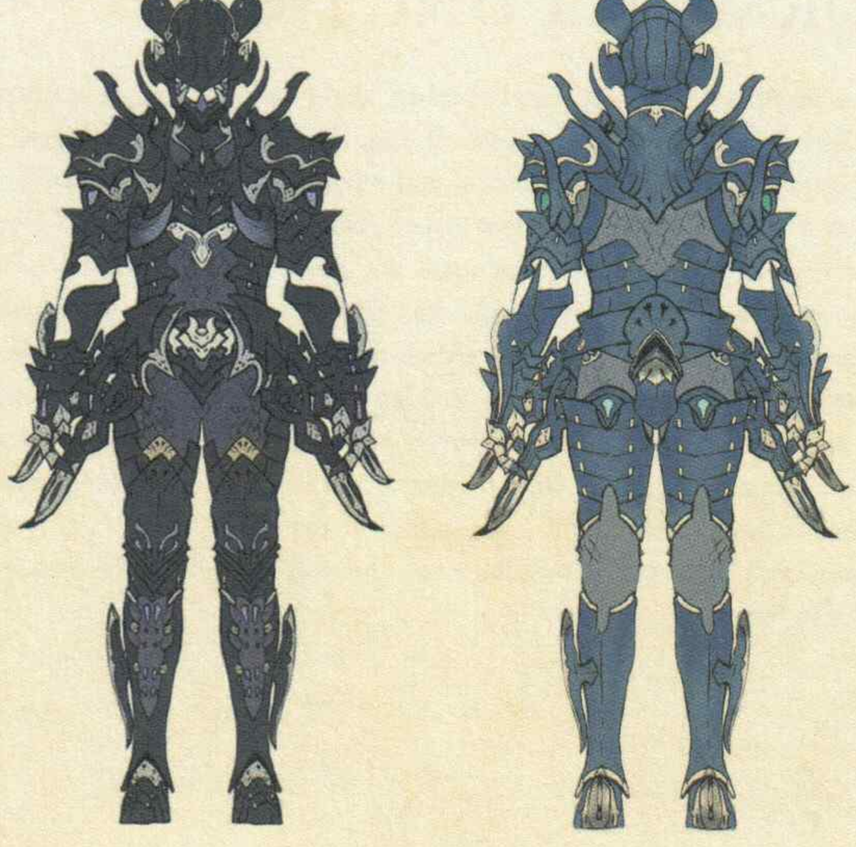
Trueblood Greaves

Astonishing lightness is the mark of armor forged with a dragon's aid, as these footguards most surely were. The heel is made of soft wood, carved with shallow indentations and studded with rivets to provide added traction in some of Coerthas's more snowy environs.

Form & Function

Though the drachen armor ministered to Ishgard's Order of the Knights Dragoon has long been modeled after that worn by Haldrath, the first Azure Dragoon, it would be unwise to suggest naught was done in the following thousand winters to improve its effectiveness in battle. Ishgard's smiths spent the centuries seeking to find a balance betwixt mobility and protection, and it was their extensive research that led them to a technique for forging lightweight metal of surpassing strength. By quenching hot mythril in dragon's blood instead of water, the smiths were able to create a suit of armor that, without sacrificing defense, would enable its wearer to perform the complex aerial maneuvers associated with the dragoon's fighting style.

It was the ending of the Dragonsong War, however, that brought the most significant improvement in Ishgardian armorsmithing with the reemergence of another long-forgotten forging technique: that of smelting ore in dragon flame to imbue its metal with arcane draconic magicks. It seems likely that Haldrath's armor, crafted in a time of friendship between man and dragon, was created using this technique.



A NINJA'S PANOPLY

Kage-kakushi Somen

This traditional mask, passed down for generations in the Kagekakushi clan, lines brow, cheeks, and jaw with a sturdy rim of metal. Also of note is the breathable cloth concealing both mouth and nose, which makes it highly effective as a filter of noxious fumes.

Kage-kakushi Chainmail

Chainmail is the ninja's preferred means of protecting his body from cuts and bites, all without compromising mobility. This particular type is forged from split wire links, tempered and then coated with lacquer to improve durability and prevent rusting.

Kage-kakushi Kyahan

Most shinobi wear knee-high kyahan to constrict their hakama and prevent the short trousers from catching on obstacles. The cloth soles are coated with resin to quiet the footsteps.

Form & Function

Ninjas originally arose from clans of mountain-dwelling commonfolk. Thus, their garb traces back to the short cotton kimono and trouser-like hakama worn by farmers and hunters, who preferred clothing less restrictive and better suited to toiling outdoors than standard ankle-length robes. Early ninja armor amounted to nothing more than a simple breastplate worn beneath such work clothing.

When shinobi took to the battlefield during the Age of Blood, they began to utilize the same chainmail that was popular amongst samurai. This period also saw the development of the trappings that characterize ninjas today: leg wraps to enable fleetness of foot, masks to conceal the visage, and kote to protect the hands. As the art of ninjutsu gradually spread its way across mainland Othard, shinobi began incorporating Doman armor into their battlegarb as well.

A SAMURAI'S PANOPLY

Myochin Haori

The handsome gold embroidery here strikes a pleasing contrast with the vermilion of the haori. Ensconced in a plain wooden sheath at the rear is a shortsword to be used should ever the samurai find himself facing dishonor.

Myochin Tekko

The leather tekko is worn on the left hand, for this is the hand which grips the scabbard when performing Iaijutsu. On its reverse is a design drawn in powdered mythril on lacquer, intended to assist the samurai in channeling aether to his blade.

Myochin Geta

Geta are one example of traditional Far Eastern footwear. Each simple sandal consists only of a wooden block with three "eyes" through which cord is threaded, yet holds to the foot quite well with the strap placed between the toes.

Form & Function

In an age when much of Hingashi was embroiled in bitter conflict, samurai would don full suits of armor similar to that shown here. Now, with the nation unified and at peace, the loyal warriors rarely have need of such robust protection, and generally prefer the much less cumbersome combination of haori over hakama.

The haori was originally a simplified version of the military jin-baori, and was worn by samurai solely on formal occasions. As it was adapted for a wider audience, it saw the reinstitution of several martial characteristics that had made the jin-baori so suitable for combat—in particular, enhanced aether flow. Because a samurai's abilities involve the manipulation of aetherial energies—Iaijutsu and Hissatsu oft being classified as unique schools of magic—habiliments that enable the increased flow of aetherial energies are as vital to the samurai as the protection they provide. In that sense, the haori is not so different from a mage's robe. A samurai, however, is much less likely to forego defense against close-range attacks, and so will generally opt to wear leather or plate mail underneath the haori.

A BARD'S PANOPLY

Storyteller's Chapeau

This hat was designed with Elezen sensibilities in mind, as is apparent in the liberal use of feathers. Its wide brim provides nigh-unmatched defense against the sun's blinding rays, enabling a hawk-eyed wearer to aim with total accuracy.

Storyteller's Coat

Cut to billow dramatically with movement, this lengthy coat adds flair to any musical performance, and is also equipped with a thick belt on which to hang one's pipes, making it a practical choice for dedicated musicians.

Storyteller's Gloves

Robust protection is afforded to the second and third fingers of the right hand, on which rests the full force of the bow when drawn. Conversely, the thumb is uncovered, the better to extract arrows from the quiver sight unseen.

Form & Function

No sooner does a bard's time on the front lines end than does his duty as a storyteller begin. His garb must, therefore, be suited to the vicissitudes of his role—resilient in combat, comfortable for travel, and dazzling during performances. Prominent theories also posit that some elements were originally incorporated to make it appropriately ceremonial for dedicating prayers to Althyk, god of time. The optimal balance among this plethora of functions is determined by the bard himself, and as a result, distinctive designs tailored to the wearer's preferences abound.

For the devout, for instance, is the choral attire, replete with accoutrements—a style harkening back to the ceremonial aoidos' attire designed by Santhelme, bard of legend. On the opposite end of the spectrum are sets that incorporate the leather armor commonly associated with light infantry, or even chainmail. Garments also differ in accordance with the bard's instrument of choice, as designs that enable rousing performances on the flute do not necessarily accommodate the lute or harp.

A MACHINIST'S PANOPLY

Gunner's Goggles

Goggles with brown-tinted lenses not only protect the machinist's vision against damage from muzzle flashes and blast debris, but also enhance it by heightening visual contrast.

Gunner's Thighboots

The length of these boots enables the machinist to comfortably fire when kneeling, while their rubber soles allow her to maintain a solid footing regardless of recoil.

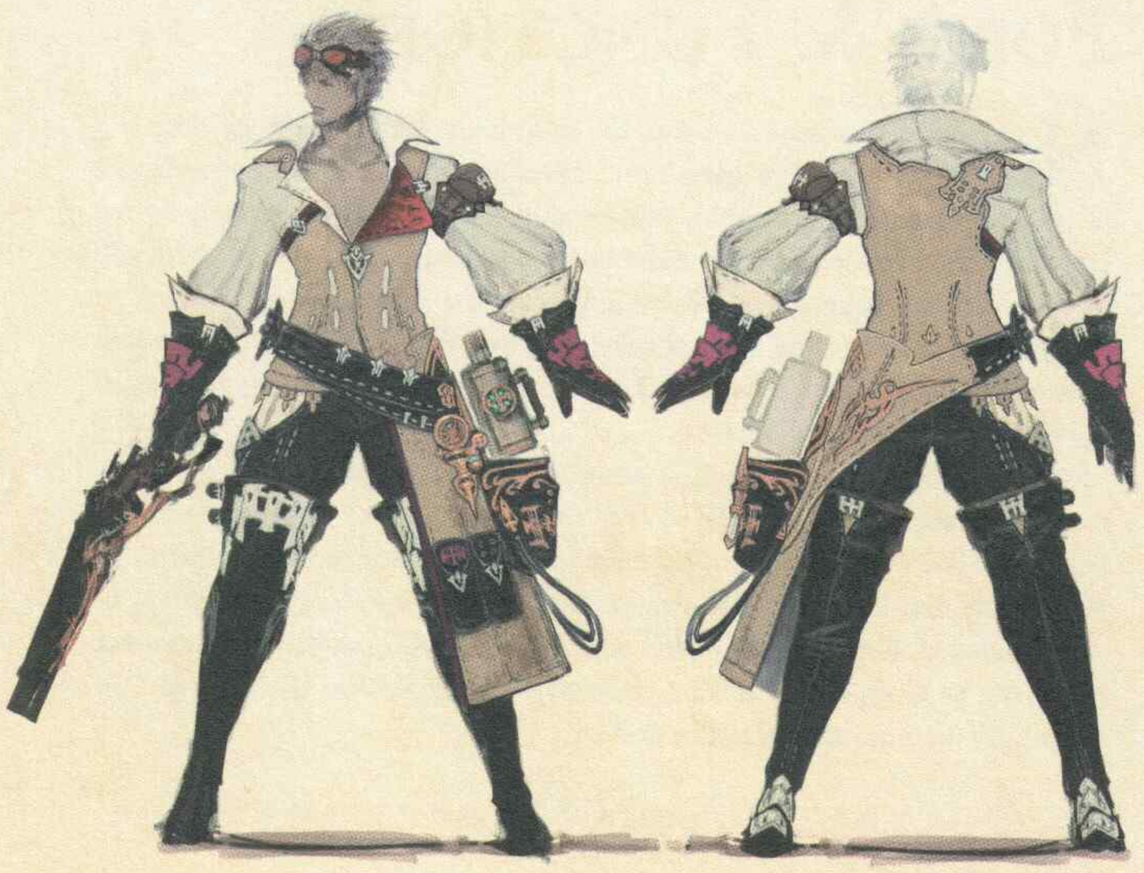
Gunner's Coat

In addition to the coattail and belt inherited from the original machinist's armor, the gunner's coat features convenient pockets on the sleeves.

Form & Function

Like the bard, the gun-wielding machinist keeps her enemies at a safe distance, and thus prefers lightweight and mobile defensive gear. In fact, she may even find the same garments worn by archers on the battlefield serviceable for her purposes. Still, the comparatively high-maintenance nature of machinist weapons has led to demand for specialized attire, which allows them to keep spare parts, maintenance tools, and the aetherotransformers that power their firearms and turrets close at hand.

The first full set of machinist's armor (pictured at right) was developed by Lord Stephanivien of House Haillenarte, the father of modern machinistry. The design, featuring a single durable coattail for storage, quickly found favor. An upgraded version dubbed the "gunner's armor" has since come to the fore, though it is in fact a mere prototype conceived during the development of a uniform for Hilda's Hounds.



A BLACK MAGE'S PANOPLY

Seventh Hell Petasos

The brim's peculiar shape is in fact one of arcane merit, designed to draw in ambient aether. In addition to providing protection from voidsent gazes, the attached cloth eyepatch reduces peripheral distractions for enhanced focus while casting.

Seventh Hell Gloves

The seventh hell gloves are augmented by large sapphires, which increase casting speed by channeling condensed aether directly to the mage's staff. The small gemstones in the rings sewn to each glove—on the left hand, ruby, on the right, emerald—also possess minor but useful magical properties.

Seventh Hell Coat

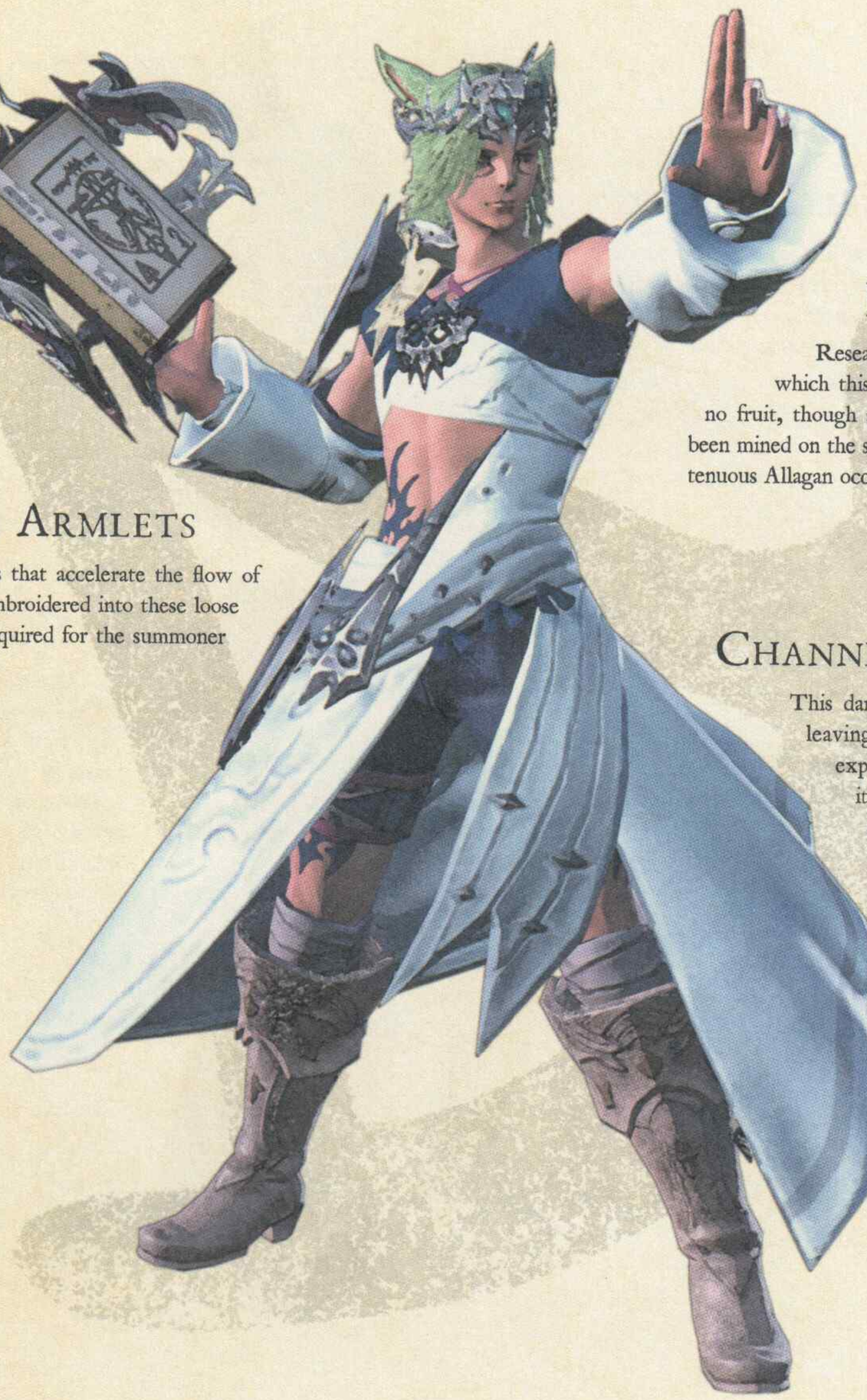
As with the petasos's brim, the sleeves and cuffs on this coat are specifically shaped to augment the wearer's magicks. The gemstones inserted in various adornments at the chest and waist aid in the manipulation of aether as it flows throughout the body.

Form & Function

A black mage's attire is best conceived of as a full-body arcane arsenal, and each piece a tool to help her wreak destruction. The intricate patterns on the back of her robe augment any number of magicks, while the mystical adornments on the front, far from being mere baubles, draw in aether from the surrounding environment that she may bend it to her will.

The large-brimmed hat so often associated with black mages is in fact a relic of Mhach, meant to shield one's vision from the accursed gaze of which many voidsent are possessed. Indeed, the danger of coming under hysteria-inducing attack was so great that some mages' hats were equipped with additional cloth to be used in blindfolding one eye entirely. It is important to note, however, that the need for such protection only came about with the advent of voidmagicks—it is unlikely that the sorceress Shatotto or other early black mages would have worn anything similar.

A SUMMONER'S PANOPLY



Channeler's Horn

Research into the nature of the alloy from which this horn was cast has thus far borne no fruit, though some conjecture that it may have been mined on the southern continent during the brief, tenuous Allagan occupation of Meracydia.

Channeler's Armlets

Complex arcane geometries that accelerate the flow of aether within the body are embroidered into these loose armlets, reducing the time required for the summoner to weave his magicks.

Channeler's Vest

This daring vest protects only the heart, leaving the upper arms and stomach exposed. The dearth of fabric makes it impossible to stitch arcane geometries as one might on a robe, so the arcanist compensates by painting one on his skin directly.

Form & Function

Any discussion of summoner equipment must needs begin with their signature horned headpieces. The horn serves as a conduit for the summoner to convey nonverbal direction to his egi, but some scholars also believe that it would have been worn as a status symbol in the days of the Allagan Empire, as it was tangible proof that one had overcome an eikon.

Aside from the horn, summoner garments resemble those of other mages, lengthy and sweeping—though they are unique in leaving some portions of skin uncovered. Y'mhitra of the Sons of Saint Coinach asserts that this preference is in fact practical, enabling the summoner to better absorb the essences of the primals he confronts. And while gaps in one's raiments do reduce overall defense, it could be argued those who dedicate themselves to harnessing primals' power for their own are not, at any rate, innately inclined to an excess of caution.

A RED MAGE'S PANOPLY

Duelist's Chapeau

As the lavish feathered ornamentation suggests, the duelist's chapeau was fashioned after a style historically popular amongst the Elezen.

Duelist's Tabard

Though capes are traditionally used for warmth, the one on this tabard instead provides ample space for weaving arcane geometries, allowing the red mage to take advantage of their boons without committing to a cumbersome full robe.

Duelist's Breeches

Augmented with protective leather on the sides of the thighs, these breeches are belted snugly to the leg to prevent their becoming a hindrance in frantic combat.

Form & Function

While the magically inclined on the whole tend to prefer long-hemmed robes, red mages are the exception. Because they rely on unhindered movement in combat, darting in for a rapier strike one moment and away to fire off a spell the next, they require equipment as flamboyant as their fighting style. Thus is a red mage's attire styled after the traditional armor of Elezen swordsmen, while yet incorporating arcane elements once favored by the black mages of Mhach and white mages of Amdapor. It is also invariably cut of red cloth, the better to distinguish him from mages of the older schools. Indeed, the Crimson Duelists, who participated in the Ala Mhigan revolution and brought about a renaissance of red magic for the modern age, were instantaneously recognizable by their vivid crimson garb.

A WHITE MAGE'S PANOPLY

Seventh Heaven Circlet

While Amdapori white mages most often wore full hoods, metal hair ornaments and circlets like this one were also prevalent.

Seventh Heaven Top

Though this style retains the length of a traditional robe, such heavy use of mythril ornamentation is quite rare for white mage attire. Also unusual is the marked distinction between male and female versions.

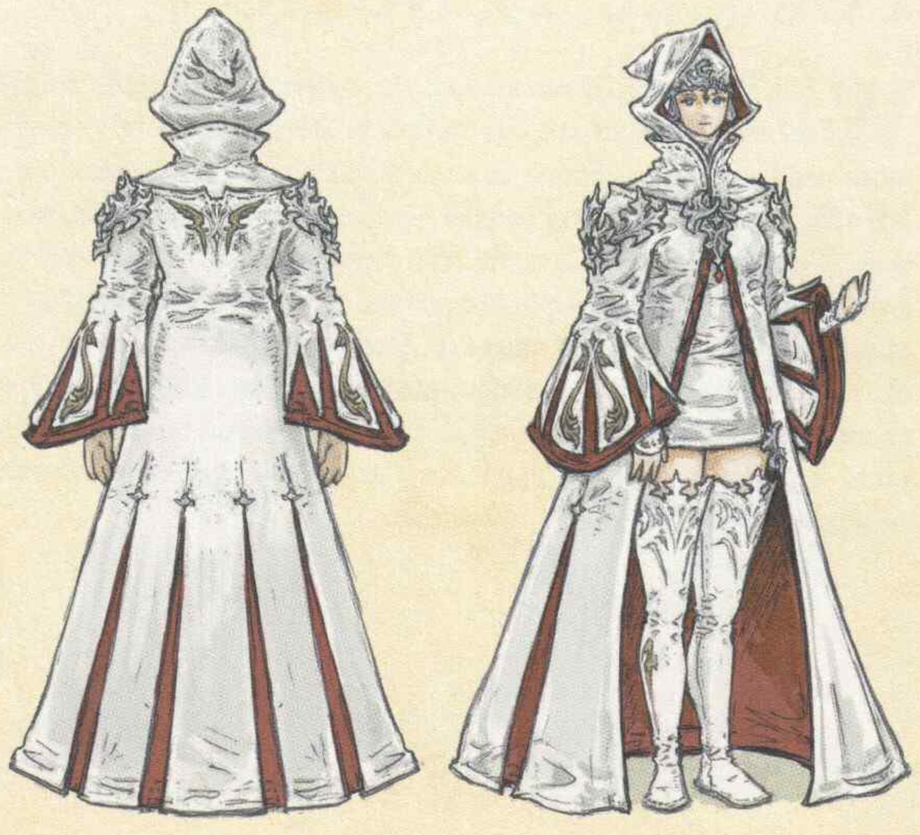
Seventh Heaven Thighboots

These sturdy and formfitting boots were made for the battlefield, enabling the white mage to rush unencumbered to wherever she is needed most.

Form & Function

The tradition of wearing pure white robes accented with red originated with the white mages of Amdapor, making it nearly as old as white magic itself. Even then, white was a symbol of purity, whereas red, reminiscent of blood, was associated with the vitality of life. Together, the two colors were meant to represent a white mage's duty: to cleanse and heal. The Amdapori took this seriously—only those who had endured intense training, been recognized by the Council of Magi for their ability, and been officially granted a soul crystal were permitted to wear the white and red.

Those who venture to the Twelveswood today will find that several of the Padjal wear the white mage's colors, having adopted them after the elementals brought the long-lost secrets of white magic to light once more. In fact, wandering Padjal A-Towa-Cant and Seedseer A-Ruhn-Senna, both healers of great repute, are widely known for their affinity for Amdapori mage garb.



A SCHOLAR'S PANOPLY

Orator's Mortarboard

Written records indicate that the scholar's mortarboard was once such a powerful symbol that the mere sight of one on the front lines could give heart to an entire battalion of Royal Marines.

Orator's Coat

This robe meets all of the needs common to Disciples of Magic, but the belt from which to hang scrolls and writing implements is specially made for scholars.

Orator's Shoes

The orator's shoes were made to last through many a campaign. Scholars would typically pair them with tightly fastened gaiters to protect their shins in combat and ensure adequate blood circulation during more academic endeavors.

Form & Function

Because Nymian scholars were part of the Royal Marines, often operating in tandem with marauders, their gear was designed with battle tactics in mind. The scholar's above-ankle hemline and comfortable shoes allow him to strategically reposition himself on the battlefield at will.

Also of note is the mortarboard, by far the most recognizable scholarly accoutrement. It was originally worn upon graduation from an educational institution as a symbol of academic achievement, but later came to be known as the mark of one who has devoted himself to the scholar's art. It is said that Nymian scholars took such pride in their caps that those who were afflicted with the Green Death continued to don their mortarboards long after their bodies became twisted and unrecognizable. As a point of interest, nearly as common amongst scholars were correctional lenses—apparently, their profession required such intense study that many developed vision problems from spending so much time poring over tomes.

AN ASTROLOGIAN'S PANOPLY

Constellation Turban

The turban is one item that came to the melting pot of Sharlayan through its scholars' study of other cultures—in this case, those of the Near East.

Constellation Top

Each astrological symbol on a scholar's attire has specific meaning. For instance, the red gemstones on this top symbolize the river of stars which stretches across the night sky, while the prominent metal adornments represent the most significant among the celestial bodies, both fixed and wandering.

Constellation Sandals

An astrologian is defined by her relationship with the stars—our own included—and thus chooses what adorns her feet with care. The soles of most astrologians' shoes, like these sandals, are made of aetherially conductive material.

Form & Function

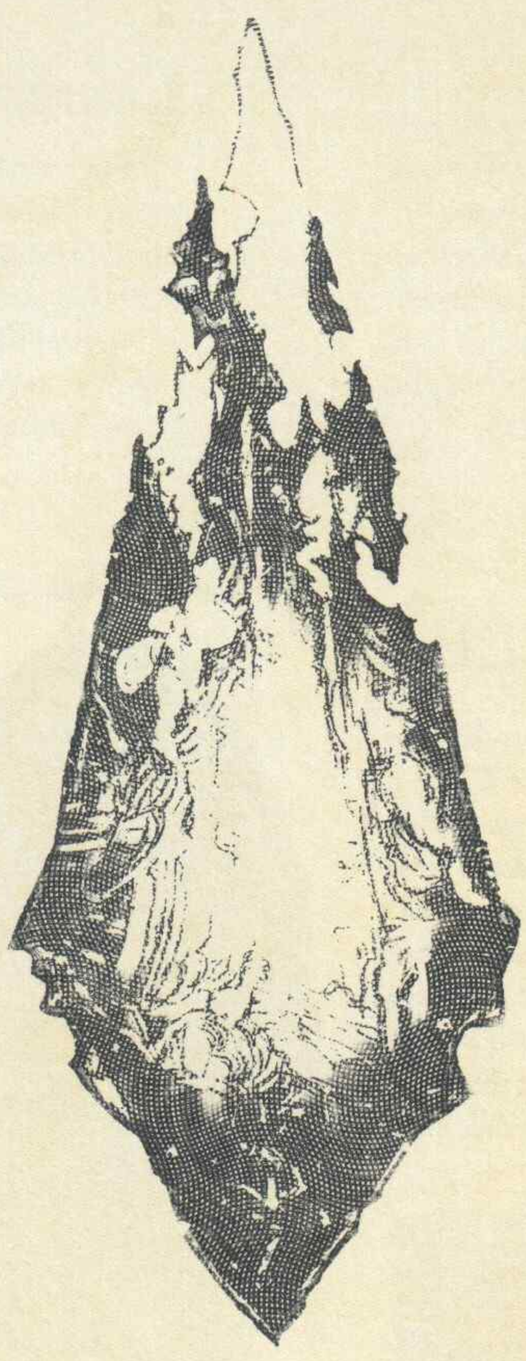
Given that the citizens of Sharlayan, birthplace of astromancy, have spent hundreds of years studying cultures the world over and gradually incorporating their traditions, it should come as no surprise that astrologian's attire appropriates elements from the garb of other Disciples of Magic. For instance, the welkin attire, designed when the school was yet new, strongly resembles the robes of a black mage, down to the pointed hat. The constellation attire, developed much later, is remarkably different, taking its inspiration from Near Eastern garb.

This trend may make different sets appear disparate indeed, but they are at least consistent in their motifs, which generally appear in the metal ornaments adorning each piece. Sun, moon, and stars—an astrologian always twinkles like the night sky.

Encyclopædia Eorzea II

BOOK VII

HER BURDENS



THE KOJIN

Easily recognized by the bulky shells upon their backs, these beastmen make their home in the waters of the Ruby Sea. Kojin hold the fervent belief that the kami of the Far East reside in all manner of objects—often valuable baubles or masterpieces of craft—and the entire tribe is consumed by the pursuit of such relics. The mercenary and merchant trades aid them in acquiring these treasures, and thus do they actively seek out contact with other races.

Physical Characteristics

In addition to their distinctive natural armor, the Kojin are known for their large and well-muscled frames. Their hearts and lungs are also highly developed, allowing them to spend extended periods underwater on a single breath. One can often observe the shells of deceased Kojin displayed upon their gates or around a settlement, where they serve as spirit guardians—a custom which stems from the belief that the souls of especially learned and long-lived brethren linger for a time within their protective carapaces.

The Red

The Blue

Symbol

There exist two distinct factions within the Kojin tribe: the Red Kojin, the more numerous and aggressive group; and the less-populous Blue Kojin, who value a more harmonious approach to life. Their respective symbols are a Kojin hand representative of martial force, and a soul-infused Kojin shell.

Diet

As ocean-dwellers, the Kojin's diet heavily favors the bounty of the sea. Fish, crabs, kelp—anything harvested under the waves is potential fare for the table. Due to the poor circulation of air within Tamamizu, however, the residents are reluctant to cook with fire, and consume much of their catch raw. But for those occasions when only a hot meal will satisfy, the Kojin have invented a dish known as "gasame stew," wherein the fire-aspected shell of the eponymous gasame is used to heat a medley of ingredients.

Leadership

Known for their prodigiously long lifespans, the Kojin hold a great respect for the aged. It follows naturally, then, that it is the elders among them who are elevated to positions of authority. The actual powers of an elder vary between the factions, with the militant marine commanders of the Red Kojin able to exert significant influence over their kin. Conversely, the Blue Kojin gather under a single elder, who provides the axis around which matters are languidly debated and resolved.

The Divine Circle

Formed at the behest of Tsukumo—an aptly named tsukumogami spirit inhabiting a Kojin-shaped doll—the Divine Circle is a treasure-seeking company of Blue Kojin. The purpose of its members is a simple one: to fill the newly built treasure vault in Tamamizu with rare and wondrous objects of potentially sacred worth. Their method of collecting these treasures values encounters of fate, relying as much on the purchase of promising marvels as it does on salvaging chance baubles from shipwrecks and flotsam. Such pursuits, however, frequently lead them into competition with their Red Kojin kin, a meeting which often erupted into violence.

Kabuto Ironshell

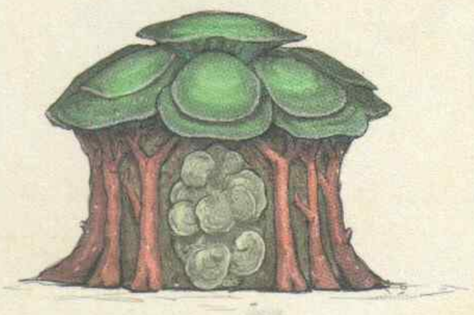
"Barter with blood and blade as you do? Never!"

An awkward youth of the Blue Kojin, Kabuto Ironshell's exceptional skill at arms allowed him to safely explore and salvage on his own. He preferred these solo expeditions, fearing that he would be unable to protect others from harm, but others misconstrued the shy Kojin's attitude as a desire for solitude, and left him to a lonely existence. Upon encountering an adventurer and the spirit-infused doll Tsukumo, however, Kabuto was appointed to lead the Divine Circle. As the head of this treasure-seeking band, he formed bonds with a host of new companions, and grew to become a trusted and respected leader despite having seen only six and twenty summers.

Society and Culture

Drawing on the eldritch wisdom of their ancestors, the Kojin are able to create everlasting bubbles of magical force to enfold their underwater holdings, such as that which encapsulates the settlement of Tamamizu. Many of the Kojin's rituals and blessings are centered on life in the sea, and their command of water- and wind-aspected energies can even allow surface dwellers the ability to breathe beneath the ocean waves.

Another, better-documented aspect of Kojin society is their preoccupation with collecting treasures. Objects that could potentially harbor the spirit of a kami are gathered from myriad sources, and stored within a treasure vault constructed for the purpose. All Kojin once shared the vault on the Isle of Zekki, but due to the philosophical rift which now separates the Red and the Blue, the latter faction has since built a new structure to house its relics.



Nomenclature

The oviparous Kojin believe that when the soul that is to inhabit an egg falls from the heavens and into the sea, it first resides within a mundane object to ease the transition into the mortal realm. It is said that the choice of object is markedly influenced by the soul's own character, and thus is the item referenced when naming the newly hatched individual. A soul which values knowledge gained through study, for example, might infuse a paperweight, which in the tongue of the Far East would result in the hatchling being named "Bunchin."

Primary Industries

Mercenary Contracts

The large and brutishly strong Red Kojin see military force as a solution in many situations, and have a long history of attacking other races in pursuit of treasures. Following the Empire's invasion, however, the Red found themselves outmanned and overmatched, and resorted to hiring themselves out to the Garleans as sellswords. As well as allowing them to retain their position in the region, this trade also enabled them to carry out their tribe's sacred purpose by requesting valuable objects in return for their mercenary services.

Trade

With their affinity for personal connections and bonds decreed by fate, the Blue Kojin prefer commerce as a means of amassing treasures. To that end, they are known for harvesting the riches of the Ruby Sea and bringing their wares to trade at the markets of neighboring nations. This mercantile practice serves not only as a tool for acquiring relics, but also as a way of obtaining fire-forged metal goods—a commodity the Kojin find difficult to craft beneath the ocean's surface.

Handicraft

The Kojin boast a high level of skill in working shells, coral, and other produce of the Ruby Sea into their crafted wares. In particular, the goods they inlay with mother of pearl are possessed of a distinctive beauty, and are prized as works of fine art.

SUSANO

One of myriad kami, the mighty Lord of the Revel arose from the desperation of the Kojin and the three sacred treasures which they believe to house his spirit. This divinity of the sea sees battle as a celebration, but challengers will find no revelry nor mercy at the edge of his fabled blade, Ame-no-Murakumo.

Origin Myth

Of the plethora of kami that fill the pantheon of the Far East, few are as revered as Susano, Lord of the Revel. In the wake of the world's creation, it was following the births of Amaterasu, god of day and the sun, and Tsukuyomi, divinity of night and the moon, that Susano did come into existence as the deity of the sea. Susano also graces the pages of myth in his incarnation as a wandering hero, and in the age of the gods when untold villains stalked the land, he went forth to battle myriad monstrosities during a grand and daring adventure. Amongst the many treasures he won on his journey, he came into possession of three sacred relics of unsurpassed potency: the mirror Yata-no-Kagami, the talisman Yasakani-no-Magatama, and the katana Ame-no-Murakumo.

For uncounted years have the sea-dwelling Kojin offered prayers to the Lord of the Revel, and aspired to obtain his relics three. Through a series of coincidences and the intervention of the Warrior of Light was this wish granted a fateful confluence of events which resulted in the unexpected summoning of the primal Susano.

THE ANANTA

A serpent-like people who inhabit the mountains of Gyr Abania. Consisting solely of women, this tribe has existed since the time of the Allagans, and are famed for their proficiency with gemcraft, employing age-old magicks handed down through generations.

Physical Characteristics

At a glance, the Ananta's upper body appears similar to that of a Hyuran female, but closer inspection reveals that the "hair" upon her head is in fact a cowl of strands formed from rigid scales. Her most distinctive feature, of course, is a serpent-like lower body—a sinuous appendage which propels her along the ground with an undulating motion. An Ananta molts at regular intervals, constantly renewing the glossy sheen of her scaled skin.

Qalyana

Vira

Symbol

Possessed of a unique sense of beauty, the Ananta favor a symbol based upon their own shimmering scales to represent their tribe. The crest of the Vira, however, is a variation of the design used by their insular kin, the Qalyana, and employs an inverse color scheme.

Diet

The Ananta are hunter-gatherers, and subsist primarily on the flesh of the prey they bring down. This reliance on meat is in large part due to the stark landscape of Gyr Abania, and the scarcity of wild fruits and other vegetation. They are, however, fond of certain species of fungi, and have been known to use mushrooms for added flavor in their cooking.

Leadership

The Ananta tribe has traditionally followed the rule of a broodmother who inherited her position through familial succession—a bloodline that legend says can be traced back to the very first Ananta brought into being by the Lady of Bliss. Since the Empire conquered the region, however, the tribe has splintered over differences in ideology, and the Qalyana broodmother's unifying presence has begun to weaken.

The Velodyna Gatekeepers

The Velodyna Gatekeepers are an Ala Mhigan Resistance unit tasked with holding the newly established border outpost at Castellum Velodyna, as well as patrolling the surrounding area. Captain Alpa commands the unit, and her presence, along with her Ananta sisters, was initially the source of frequent culture-based upsets for the racially diverse contingent. Through supplementing their inexperienced ranks with battle-hardened adventurers and other such inventive solutions, however, the Gatekeepers have slowly developed into a tight-knit company. Many of its members are former smiths, and taking advantage of their talents to expand the castellum's facilities has also garnered praise from the unit's superiors.

Alpa

"What were you saying
about our guest being 'lovesick?'
What kind of love makes you sick?"

Alpa is the only daughter of Sarisha, the Vira broodmother. Although unskilled in battle, Alpa wished to play a part in Gyr Abania's emancipation, and enlisted in the Ala Mhigan Resistance as a metalsmith. Upon hearing of the Warrior of Light's exploits, however, she was inspired to request the position of guard captain at the newly liberated Castellum Velodyna. Her superiors granted the request, and immediately following her seventeenth nameday, she assumed command at the border outpost with her adjutant, J'olhmyn. Cultural differences between the Ananta and Ala Mhigan members proved problematic, but Alpa would overcome these challenges and more through steadfast bravery and even-handed diplomacy.

Society and Culture

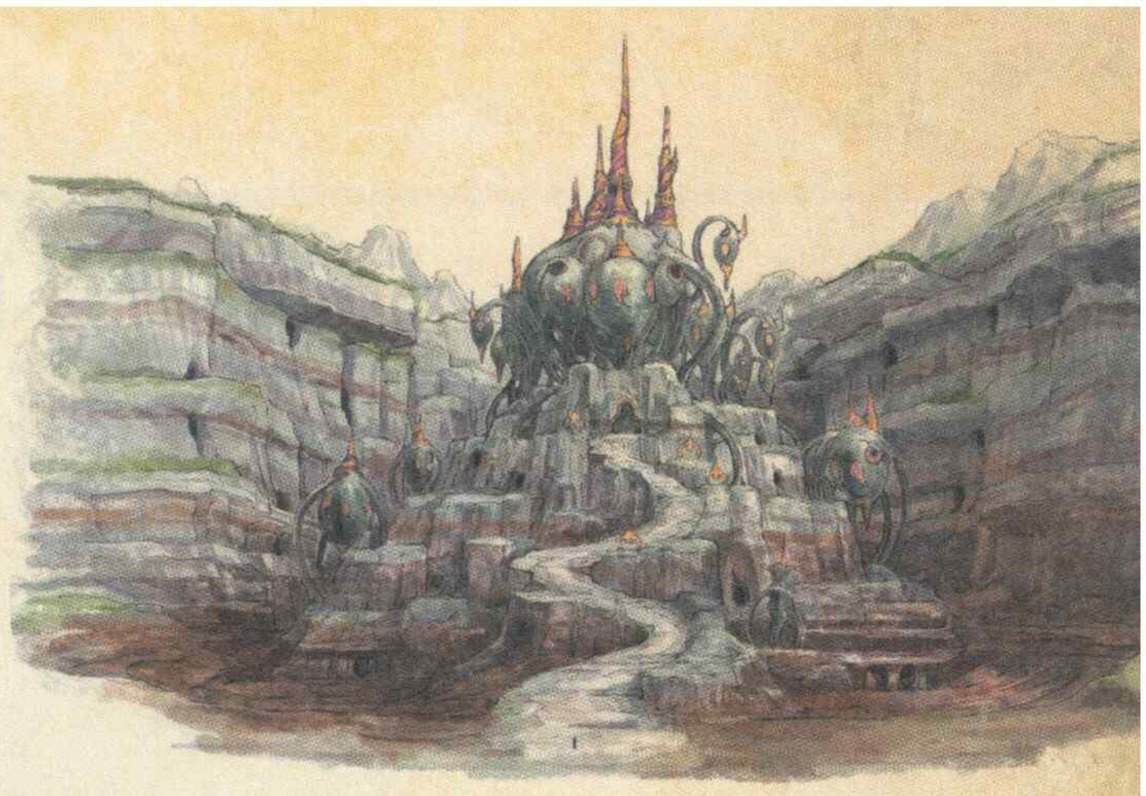
The Ananta are proficient in metal-shaping spellcraft, and use their magicks to construct ovoid dwellings from the ore they draw forth from the ground. Djanan Qhat, the Qalyana broodmother's fortress, is a prime example of this unique form of architecture. Ensconced within their territory, the Qalyana isolate themselves from other civilizations in a bid to preserve their traditional way of life.

Conversely, the Vira faction of the Ananta elected to leave their ancestral stronghold and found the small settlement of Vira Nilya to the southwest. Unified under the guidance of Sarisha, the Vira have contributed soldiers to the Ala Mhigan Resistance, and actively sought interaction with outsiders. They are also known to have formed a beneficial relationship with the nearby M tribe, and regularly barter goods with the Miqo'te.

Regardless of faction, all Ananta decorate their bodies with spell-shaped metallic jewelry featuring embedded crystals. These crystalline pieces are worn to honor Lakshmi's demands for beauty, and are valued as a reflection of the wearer's soul.

Nomenclature

Ananta lay eggs without the need for a mate, and whilst the bonds between mother and daughter are strong, they have but a tenuous concept of family. For these serpentine women there is only the "Ananta" and "everyone else"—they do not see the necessity for a family name to distinguish themselves from their own kin. The names of individuals come from their own language, and are often based upon Ananta terms for things of beauty.



Primary Industries

Metalsmithing

Unlike the forgecraft of other races, where minerals are refined with fire, the Ananta employ spells to extract metal directly from the ore. The materials thus obtained are then shaped with the caress of magic rather than the blow of a hammer, resulting in pieces which shimmer with a preternatural gleam. Those especially practiced in the art can manufacture adornments of incredibly delicate and organic design with a swiftness that would be all but impossible using conventional crafting methods. Until recently, the market for these goods has been limited to neighbors such as the M tribe, but with the reopening of trade routes, entrepreneurs expect demand for the jewelry to sweep across Eorzea.

Weaving

The Ananta are also known for weaving bolts of exquisite cloth, but have proven unwilling to divulge the secrets of their craft. Both the Weavers' and Alchemists' guilds of Ul'dah have examined the cloth in an attempt to divine the method of its creation, but have succeeded only in deducing that some manner of enchantment accompanied the spinning of the thread.

SRI LAKSHMI

Legends concerning the Lady of Bliss tell of a beauty without equal, a benevolent goddess whose coming brings the promise of halcyon days and bountiful harvests. Some believe she has imparted her life-bestowing powers to her most fervent followers—the Ananta. Lakshmi, in her infinite mercy, would shelter them from harm, granting them succor with her alluring embrace.

Origin Myth

In the beginning, the nascent world was a storm of chaos. All who lived upon it were frenzied and wild, and brought only harm to each other in the struggle for survival. Filled with despair at this wretched sight, Sri Lakshmi, the Lady of Bliss, took up handfuls of clay and sculpted a figure in Her own image. Unto this figure She breathed life and will, and of Her gentle touch was born the first of the Ananta. From Her beauty did emerge beauty; by Her providence was a command over earth imparted.

Amongst Lakshmi's blessings was a sliver of Her boundless fertility, bestowing upon Her creations the gift of motherhood without need for a male counterpart. From this divine conception were born children of abundant vitality graced by the unreserved compassion of the goddess, the daughter's qualities were destined to diverge from the mother, and thus ensure splendid diversity for the tribe.

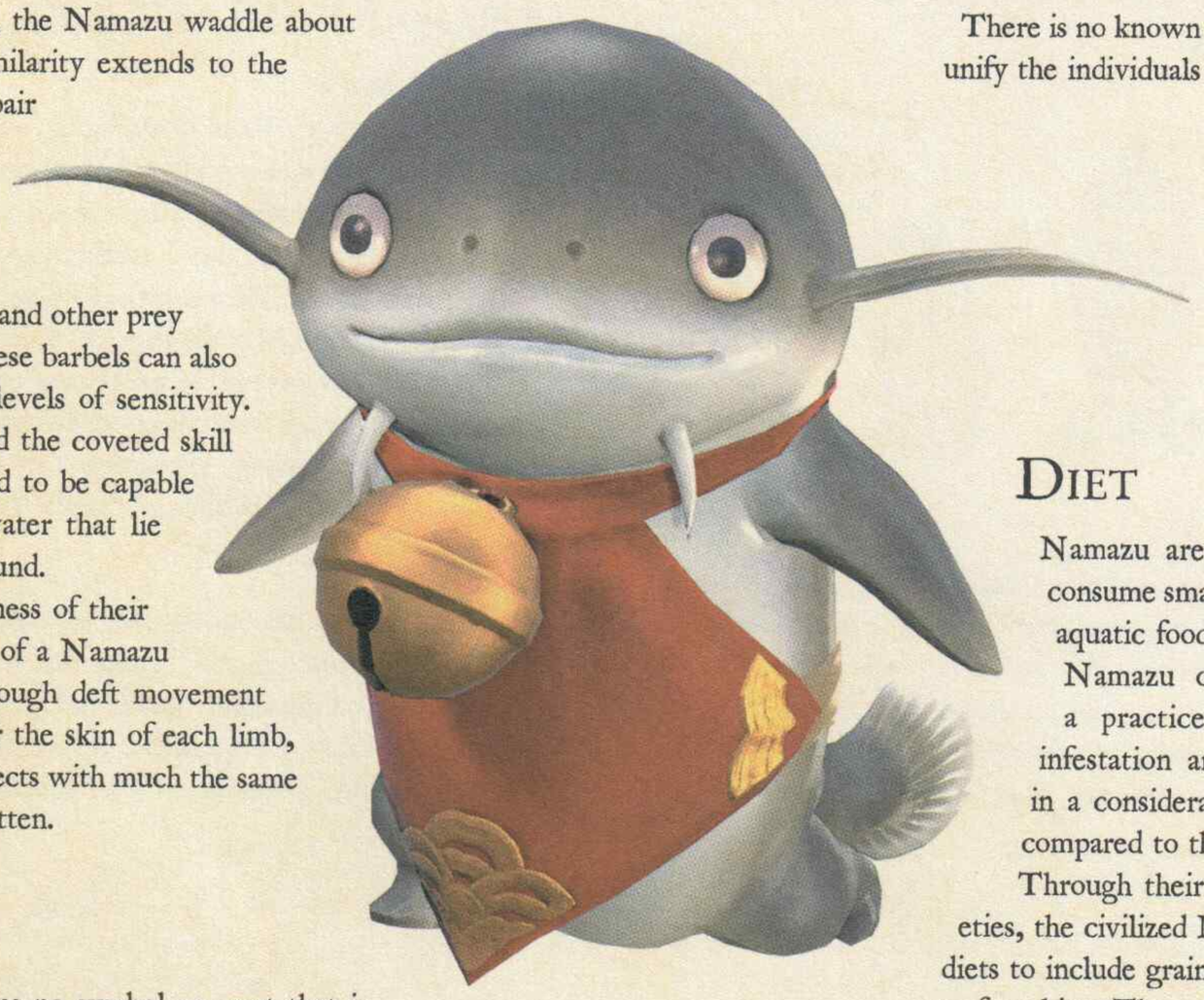
THE NAMAZU

These fish-featured folk make their home in the Glittering Basin. Though they appear unintelligent, the Namazu are quite capable of speech, and some among their number have embraced civilization to the extent that they now live alongside the citizens of Doma. No few others, however, seem content to continue a primitive, mud-covered existence.

Physical Characteristics

Appearing as upright catfish, the Namazu waddle about on two stumpy legs. This similarity extends to the catfish's four barbels, with a pair of the keen sensory whiskers sprouting from both the upper and the lower jaw. As well as allowing the Namazu to quickly locate fish and other prey within the murkiest waters, these barbels can also be trained to achieve higher levels of sensitivity. An individual who has attained the coveted skill of "Namazu detection" is said to be capable of divining veins of ore or water that lie beneath the surface of the ground.

Despite the apparent clumsiness of their anatomy, the fin-like "arms" of a Namazu are unexpectedly supple. Through deft movement of the five bones hidden under the skin of each limb, they are able to manipulate objects with much the same dexterity as a hand inside a mitten.



Leadership

There is no known governing body that serves to unify the individuals of the Namazu tribe.

Diet

Namazu are omnivorous, but prefer to consume small fish, crustaceans, and other aquatic food sources. The mud-dwelling Namazu often eat their catch raw, a practice which leads to parasite infestation and other illnesses, resulting in a considerably shorter average lifespan compared to their more cultured kin.

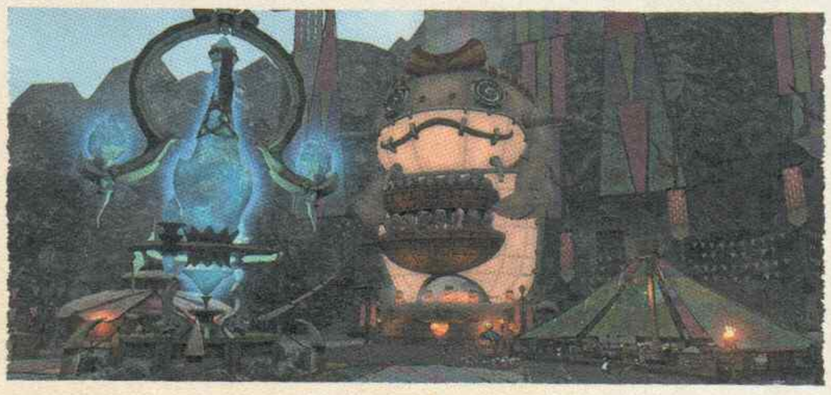
Through their interaction with other societies, the civilized Namazu have expanded their diets to include grains and fruits, and adopted the art of cooking. They also display a keen interest in the culture of tea, and will manufacture any excuse to get their fins on a steaming cup of this favored beverage. The Namazu physiology is susceptible to some property of the drink, which induces in them an intoxicating effect identical to that of alcohol.

Symbol

The Namazu possess no symbol or crest that is common to the entire tribe. The group running the festival in the Azim Steppe, however, have imitated the banners of the native nomads, and raised their own enigmatic, swirling design. According to its creators, the standard represents the eddies and currents of the One River.

The Seven Hundred Seventy-Seven

This group is responsible for holding a curious and ongoing celebration on the outskirts of the Azim Steppe. Gyoshin, the young Namazu who originated the festival, claims that his greatest grandsire came to him in a dream. The ancestor warned that every seven hundred and seventy-seven years, the Namazu must hold a seven-year celebration commemorating the birth of the tribe, else their people will face annihilation once seven more years have passed. Upon hearing of this ominous visitation, the tribe's most well-read academic, Seigetsu the Enlightened, offered his extensive advice on how to proceed, and thus were the bewildering festivities of the Seven Hundred Seventy-Seven began.



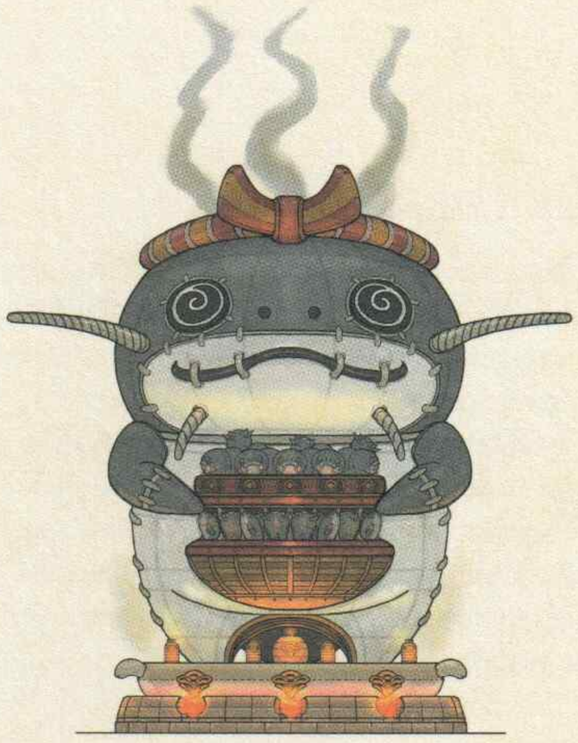
Gyoshin

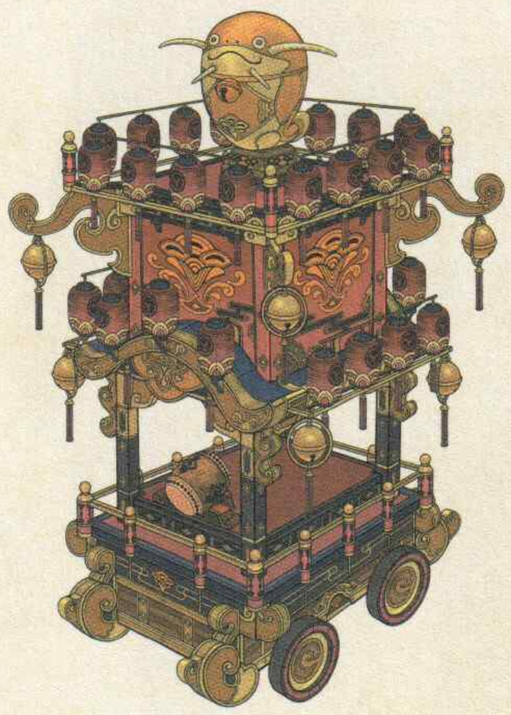
"I paraded with such enthusiasm that I eventually lost all sense of time, all awareness of night and day...and when I came to, I was unconscious!"

Gyoshin is a self-proclaimed expert artisan of three and twenty summers, whose unrelenting passion and deftness of fin has allowed him to master a diverse range of crafting skills, from smithing and carpentry to leatherworking and weaving. With only a sample object or diagram as a reference, he is capable of producing goods of extraordinary quality, often adding his own, unique touch in the process. So focused are his powers of concentration, in fact, that he will build structures of colossal proportions without halting for sleep or rest. For one so dextrous, however, Gyoshin is also surprisingly careless, and once hovered on the threshold betwixt life and death after running headfirst into a falling vase—his recovery solely attributed to a steaming bowl of his companion Gyorei's renowned miso stew.

Society and Culture

Having lived apart from the influence of civilized races, the piscine Namazu were long considered a barbaric and primitive people. This lowly opinion, however, was to change during the foundation of Doma some 800 years ago, when General Ganen of the noble Rijin family enlisted a number of the tribe's more adventurous souls as messengers. These Namazu swam the waters of the One River as arrows sped overhead, and delivered vital missives to an allied army on the far bank. This allowed Ganen to coordinate his forces on both sides of the river, and ultimately seize victory in the war. For the Namazu's part in unifying the factions of Yanxia under one nation, Ganen gifted them with shining bells—symbols of their deeds as "bringers of good tidings." This acknowledgement would become the origin for the Namazu's present-day practice of sporting bells around their necks, and signal the beginning of the tribe's integration into Doman and, to a lesser extent, Far Eastern society.





Nomenclature

Amongst the civilized Namazu, names are generally formed from a combination of "Gyo"—the Far Eastern word for "fish"—and another, ending syllable. This naming convention is thought to have arisen from General Ganen's response to his vassals, who opposed his plans for recruiting the services of the Namazu on the grounds that it would be akin to enlisting wild beasts. Ganen's counterargument was simply that, "They are 'gyojin.' They are fishmen."

Primary Industries

Fishing

Propelled through the water by their fins and tails, and guided by their sensitive whiskers, the Namazu are highly proficient in the art of spearfishing. Although they hunt mainly to fill their own bellies, they will occasionally take their catches to town to sell on the street. Some few individuals even venture beyond the Glittering Basin to the Ruby Sea or the shallows around Hingashi to earn a living with their fish-spearing skills.

Domestic Retainer

Following on from the Namazu's acceptance into civilized society as messengers and scouts, there were instances of the ruling family and their vassals hiring the fishmen onto their household staffs. Considering the Namazu's largely carefree—not to mention careless—nature, it could hardly be said that they were suitable candidates for such positions. As such, the trend is often explained as a means for those of the nobility to visibly display generosity and affluence by offering employment to these less-than-desirable employees.

Beast Tribe

As the Namazu have yet to summon a primal, they are not considered a beast tribe by the standards of the Garlean Empire. They also worship no patron deity, but instead simply show respect to the spirit of the "Big One," the earliest ancestor of their people.

THE BIG ONE

Origin Myth

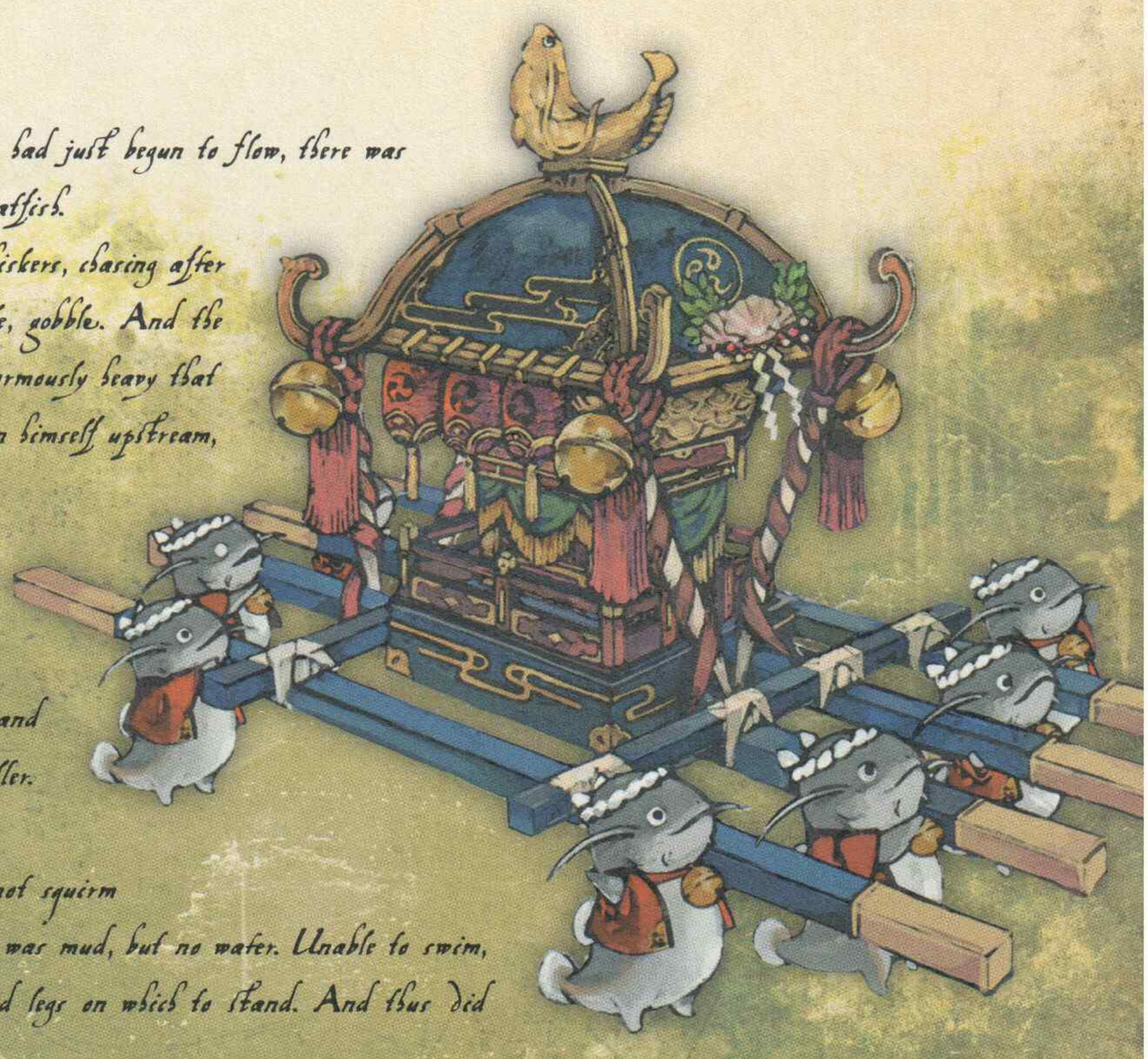
Once upon a time, long, long, long ago, when the One River had just begun to flow, there was born on the bottom of a tiny, tiny stream a walloping great catfish.

Day in, day out, this monstrous specimen would twitch its whiskers, chasing after fish and gobbling them down. Day in, day out. Gobble, gobble, gobble. And the more he ate, the larger he grew, until one day he'd become so enormously heavy that he could no longer chase his dinner. So what did he do but turn himself upstream, and open wide his cavernous maw.

Carried by the current, fish after fish was swept down his gullet. And the already enormous catfish grew to such spectacular size that he became wedged between the banks of the stream. Resigned to the price for his gluttony, he twisted and bit, shearing off the end of his own tail to make himself smaller. The tip fell and flopped and turned into a little catfish.

Yet even with the loss of his tail, the colossal catfish could not squirm free. The stream was blocked, and the current ran dry. There was mud, but no water. Unable to swim, the little catfish propped himself up on his fins, and sprouted legs on which to stand. And thus did the tail which became a catfish become a Namazu.

And lest the fate of the gargantuan catfish be forgotten, he surrendered his struggles, and rose into the heavens to become a star in the night sky. Freed of the behemoth's bulk, the stream suddenly gushed forth once more, and the waddling Namazu was washed away, head over fins, fins over head. Finding himself on the Glittering Basin, that is where he chose to stay, happily ever after.



THE LUPIN

This race of wolf-headed warriors is known in the Far East for their martial prowess. In the nation of Doma, the Lupin have built a history of serving the samurai as an integral part of their support forces.

Physical Characteristics

The Lupin exhibit many characteristics of a wolf, their feral features accompanied by sharp-clawed fingers, and a thickly furred tail. Domans once called them "jinro" or "manwolf," but this term has mainly been supplanted by "Lupin"—a name common in Ilsabard and western regions, and said to originate from ancient Elezen folklore.

In addition to their impressive agility, Lupin are able to detect the faintest of sounds and boast a heightened sense of smell. They also have poor eyesight, but a wide field of vision, granting them a superior ability to track movement.

Diet

In earlier times, the Lupin survived as hunters, and subsisted entirely on the flesh of their prey. Since their exposure to more civilized societies, however, the wolfmen began eating vegetables and grains, and steadily shifted to an omnivorous diet. Yet despite this broadening of their culinary horizons, meat still remains the Lupin's first choice of menu.

Leadership

Interaction with other societies and their cultures—be the relationship beneficial or antagonistic—has had a transformative influence on the Lupin's behavior. The wolfmen's present clan-like hierarchy is one such change, with multiple blood-related families gathering under a single authority figure. This authority is primarily inherited through succession, but it is also not uncommon for the position to be seized by force.

Society and Culture

The geographical origin of the Lupin is unknown—even the most ancient of records state only that they lived as nomadic hunters, always following the migration of their prey. Those wolfmen who now reside in the Far East recount tales from 2,000 summers past, when they first came through Nagxia from the distant west to settle in the lands of Yanxia. Their arrival brought them into conflict with the native Hyur and Roegadyn, and history is rife with stories of their clashes. Eventually, however, the Lupin were drawn into the regional struggle for supremacy, with rival factions vying to purchase their military might, and through the fulfillment of these mercenary contracts did they begin to establish their presence in the area. The Lupin commander Garo and his unusual friendship with Doma's founding father is an especially famous case. His acceptance as Ganen's chief retainer was a turning point which saw a long line of Garo's descendants swearing allegiance to Doma, and finding service with the nation's samurai army.

Primary Industry

Soldiery

Famed for their fierce loyalty as well as their skill at arms, the Lupin were well represented by the descendants of Garo, who never once betrayed their liege lord in over 800 years of Doman history. They do, however, measure their pride by the strength of their leader, and when Doma was conquered by the Garlean Empire, a number of Lupin who had become dissatisfied with Lord Kaien chose to abandon his service. Many of these deserters later fell into a life of banditry.

THE TENGU

These winged folk have long been native to the lands of the Far East. Ordinarily, tengu hide deep in the mountains, far away from civilization, but do have occasional contact with the societies of man. Known for their peculiar and unique sorceries, the tengu are often attributed as the cause of many an inexplicable phenomenon.

Diet

Although tengu have had dealings with man since ancient times, their culinary habits remain the subject of conjecture. Adamant as they are about concealing their faces, these secretive beings are never caught consuming food in front of others. They are, however, known to enjoy wines and other such beverages, and bottles of sake are always a prudent choice when presenting gifts to the tengu.

Leadership

The tengu people have no form of government. There have been instances of tengu bands led by powerful individuals which have formed ties with rulers or prominent organizations, but these are the exception rather than the rule.

Physical Characteristics

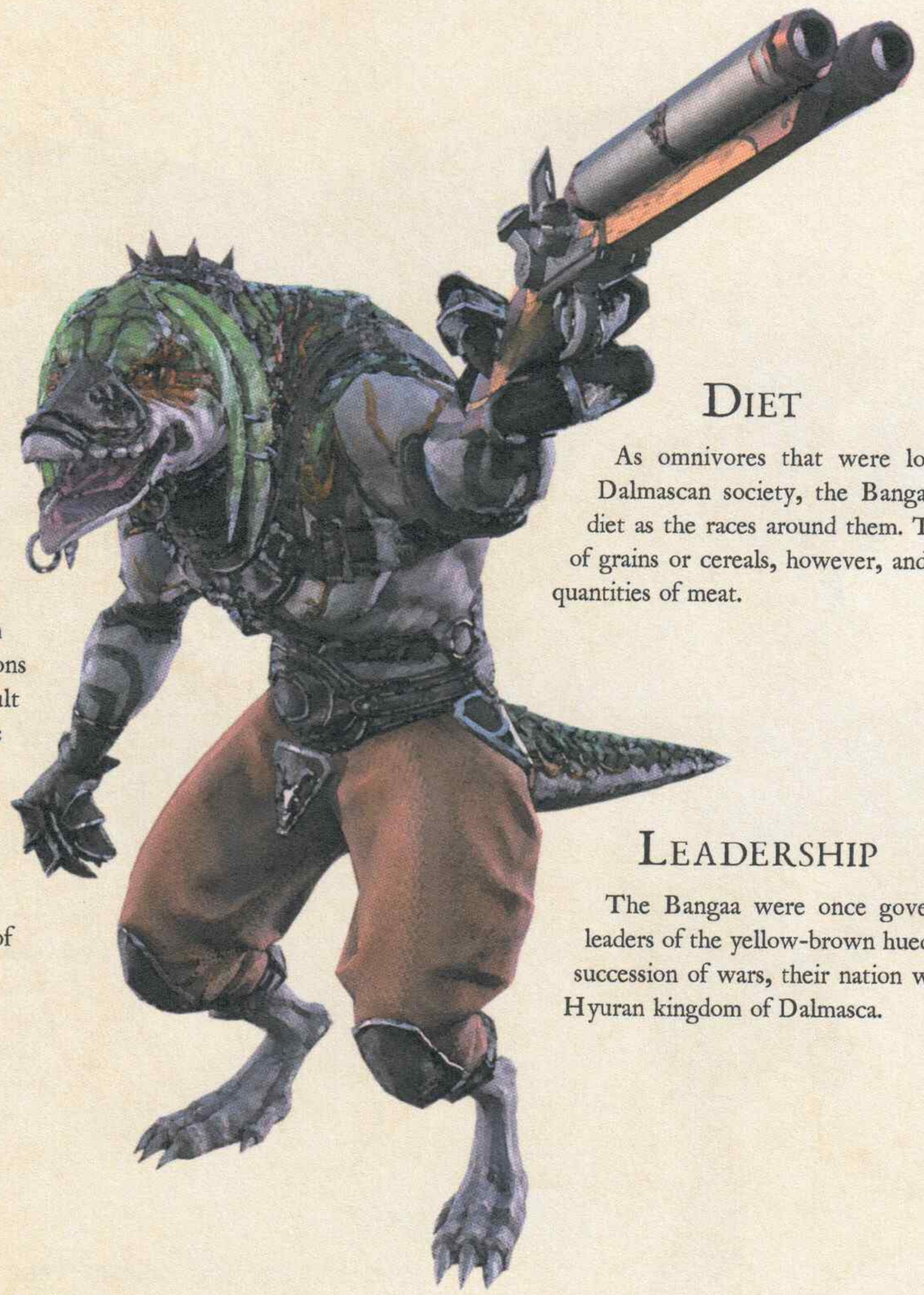
The most notable feature of the tengu is the pair of broad, feathered wings sprouting from their backs. These powerful appendages allow the tengu to fly effortlessly above any terrain, no matter how steep or treacherous, and return safely to their mountain abodes. Tengu are also famed for never revealing their true faces—though they might appear with avian or oni-like countenances, these are naught more than conjured illusions. It is said that these mystic disguises are further enspelled to burn away a tengu's visage upon his death.

Society and Culture

With their oral tradition of passing on the secrets of the ages, the tengu have long been venerated as receptacles of ancient knowledge. In addition to their own, unique form of spellcraft, it is thought that the tengu's wisdom is also the basis for the wind-, earth-, and water-aspected magicks of geomancy. One of Doma's folktales even goes so far as to claim that the tutor to the young Ganen was, himself, a tengu. But the winged folk are not always painted in such a benevolent light. Indeed, they are often accused of putting their esoteric knowledge to nefarious use, and have been historically connected to myriad plots and intrigue.

THE BANGAA

The Bangaa were once a common sight in the former kingdom of Dalmasca. Powerfully built and full of vigor, they are said to live almost twice as long as the average Hyur. Despite this vitality, however, their people birth offspring but rarely, leading to a comparatively low population.



Physical Characteristics

Covered in rigid scales from head to toe, the thickly muscled frame of the Bangaa lends them prodigious strength and stamina. Their long-snouted appearance might cause some to mistake them for a variety of scalekin, but comparisons to lizards are considered a grave insult amongst their kind. When it comes to the hue of their scales, Bangaa can range from an iron grey to a coppery or yellow-brown color. This coloring is usually a means of identifying their clan of origin, but the mixed breeding of recent years has made this method of determination less than certain.

Diet

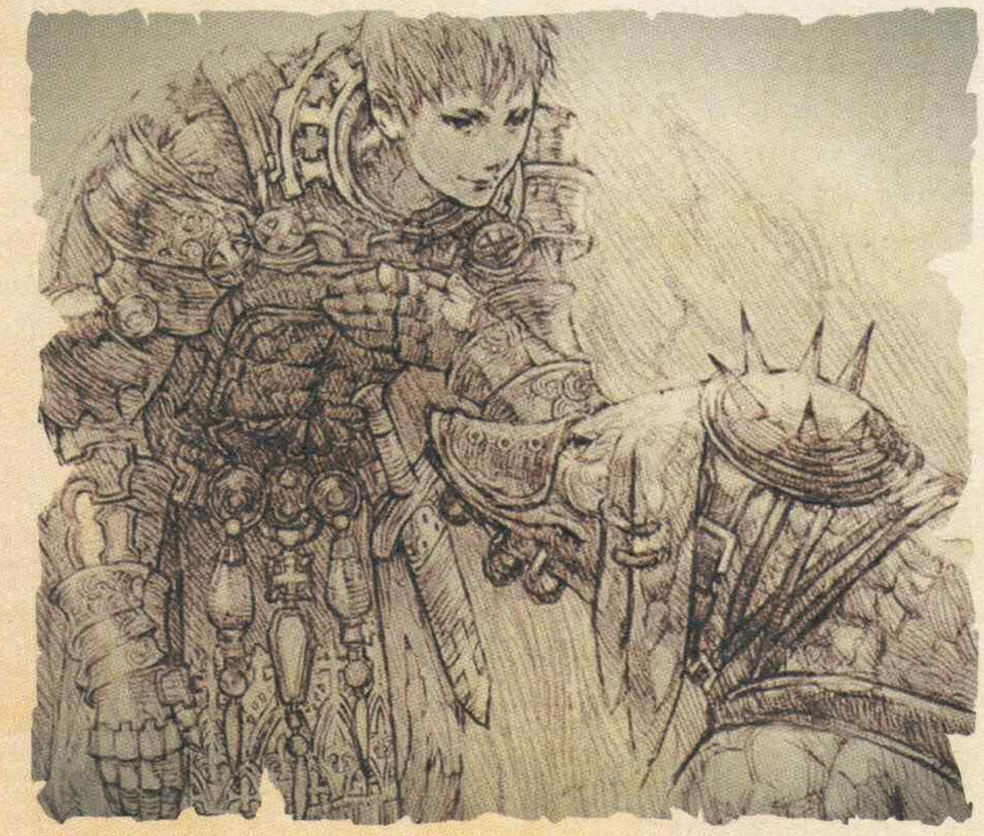
As omnivores that were long ago integrated into Dalmascan society, the Bangaa share much the same diet as the races around them. They are not overly fond of grains or cereals, however, and tend to consume larger quantities of meat.

Leadership

The Bangaa were once governed by the religious leaders of the yellow-brown hued clans, but following a succession of wars, their nation was assimilated into the Hyuran kingdom of Dalmasca.

Society and Culture

As citizens of Dalmasca, the Bangaa carved themselves an important niche in society. With their superior musculature and endurance they were in high demand as laborers and soldiers, and those who proved exceptionally loyal and skilled even became knights in the service of the royal family.



Primary Industry

Masonry

The grueling work of quarrying stone, transporting heavy loads, and further shaping the rock into usable blocks is a process which requires unyielding stamina and patience. As a people with both of these qualities in abundance, it comes as no surprise that the Bangaa were prominent in the field of masonry. Some even say that without their robust involvement, the resplendent stone structures of Rabanastre, royal capital of Dalmasca, might never have been built. Under the rule of the Garlean Empire, the Bangaa are singled out for their bestial appearance and powerful physiques. Forced to perform brutal physical labor for hours on end, death through simple exhaustion is not uncommon.

THE SEEQ

This race of beastmen is known for their corpulent appearance. The Seeq once dominated the temperate fields of southern Ilsabard, but were forced to migrate to Othard after losing the war for their territory.

Physical Characteristics

With their drooping ears and upturned noses, the Seeq might be described as boar-like. The race has a chronic tendency towards obesity, prompting insults which compare them with a giant's weight without the benefit of towering height. Despite their rotund bodies, however, the Seeq move with deceptive swiftness, capable of delivering devastating melee blows which carry the full force of their considerable mass.

Leadership

Though capable of speech, the Seeq are not gifted with an abundance of intellect, and have thus struggled to establish anything beyond the most basic of social structures. Unable to form governing bodies on a nationwide level, their communities have been limited to haphazard gatherings of blood-related familial groups.

Diet

The Seeq have an uncomplicated attitude towards food: anything edible will be eaten. And due to the amount they consume and the messy manner in which they consume it, they have earned a reputation for horrendous table manners. The disgust of other Dalmascans is such that children who show poor etiquette at meals are reprimanded with the expression, "You'll be a Seeq by dessert!" Thanks to the race's keen sense of taste and smell, however, some individuals have made their mark as respected gourmets. One notable Seeq publishes a series of culinary guidebooks which are followed with almost fanatical devotion in the Thavnairian city of Radz-at-Han.

Society and Culture

Anything which glitters is gold to a Seeq, and the boarmen routinely festoon their bodies with gaudy gems and jewelry. Without the knowledge or facility to craft such things themselves, the adornments they favor are almost entirely the product of other races' expertise.

Primary Industries

Banditry

Crude of manner and bereft of morals, the average Seeq is likely to choose the path of least resistance when it comes to obtaining a desired object. And as that path generally equates to "stealing," no few of the unscrupulous beastmen turn to a life of banditry. This mindset also often leads to a career in grave robbing, or picking over the ruined remains of settlements ravaged by war or calamity. Such unsavory deeds have greatly contributed to the general perception of the Seeq as a race of brigands.

Mushroom Gathering

Taking advantage of their superior olfactory senses, some Seeq have made their fortune by sniffing out buried mushrooms of gourmet quality. These enterprising individuals are often referred to as "truffle hunters."

THE MATANGA

Much about this tribe of mammoth-headed warriors has yet to be properly studied. The most commonly accepted theory places the origin of the Matanga in the Near East, but in recent years they have also been spotted roaming the plains of the Azim Steppe.

Physical Characteristics

The Matanga rival the gigas in size, and their thick limbs are possessed of enormous strength. Despite their ponderous gait, each step carries them a considerable distance, and outrunning an enraged Matanga across the open steppe is a feat best attempted on horseback.

The unusual vocal cords of these mammoth-like people make ordinary speech difficult, and even assuming they understand the tongues of men, their pronunciation is nigh incomprehensible. This led to the long-held belief that the Matanga are dull-witted beasts, but research by Near Eastern naturalists indicated their intelligence is not as stunted as first thought. It was also discovered that the beastmen's extraordinary ears can detect sounds below the range of normal hearing, and that they communicate with spoken words combined with a pattern of foot stomps. Certain of their vocalizations are too deep for other races to register, however, and thus a complete understanding of Matanga history, culture, or way of thinking has proven difficult to grasp.

Leadership

A warrior-leader known as the "grand regent" rules over the Matanga herd. This title, however, was one of many which belonged to the king of a now-ruined Near Eastern nation, and seems merely a convenient substitution for the word used in their own language. Much of the tribe's culture is thus lost in translation, with scholars yet struggling to fully define how this authority is decided or acted upon. Under the Garlean regime, the Matanga are not afforded the status of people, their inability to pronounce "civilized" tongues relegating them to the status of slaves or cattle. Following the command of an individual known as the grand regent Anjana, one group broke free of their chains and fled their brutal treatment at the hands of the imperials. Their wild escape took them to plains of the Azim Steppe, where they now live in a state of conflict with the native Xaela.

Society and Culture

Although the reason is unclear, the Matanga despise the Au Ra with a fury. Their hatred runs so deep that when they attack the Azim Steppe natives, it is not for food or plunder, but for the sole purpose of killing Au Ra. Naturally, the proud Xaela natives do not shrink from a fight, and often the would-be slaughterers find themselves cut down in a vicious counterattack. Yet no matter how decisively the Au Ra punish their tormentors, the Matanga return again and again, as if driven by some inexorable force.

Diet

Matanga primarily eat plant matter such as grasses, fruits, and vegetables. On occasion, they have also been seen to consume salt-laden clay or shale, but this is merely a means to supplement the minerals lacking in their herbivorous diet. It is said that Near Eastern warlords once took the Matanga as slave soldiers, and fed them hay laced with potent alchemical concoctions.

Primary Industry

Gathering

Like many hunter-gatherer tribes, the Matanga originally ranged from forest to field, subsisting on that which nature had to provide. They live much the same lifestyle on the Azim Steppe, feeding on wild grasses and other available vegetation. This has proven the source of much hostility, however, as their gathering forays often target the pastures grazed upon by Xaela cattle.

OTHER PRIMALS

SHINRYU

This primal was summoned by Ilberd Feare, former captain of the Crystal Braves. Contrary to the many entities called forth as embodiments of faith, Shinryu manifested as an incarnation of the all-consuming hatred Ilberd held for the Garlean Empire. As a divine presence without benefit of a divine mythology, the primal's existence was an anomaly which questioned the established fundamentals of ritual summoning.

One mystery is why, without an origin myth to guide its formation, Shinryu took the shape of a dragon. The Scions surmised that its appearance was related to the rite's source of aether—the eyes of the dread wyrm Nidhogg. Their report also included notes regarding Ilberd's presence at Bahamut's catastrophic awakening, detailing how his memories of the elder primal may have lent form to his desire for an entity of unprecedented might. But whilst neither theory provides a certain answer, the astonishing fact remains: a single-minded wish for the Empire's annihilation imbued a primal with a strength which rivaled—if not surpassed—that of the prayers of deep-rooted faith.

TSUKUYOMI

Tsukuyomi, divinity of night and the moon, was a primal summoned by Yotsuyu goe Brutus, acting viceroy of Doma. Although the deity spoken of in mythology is not attributed a gender, Tsukuyomi is most often represented in works of art and literature as a male figure. By channeling the power of a sacred mirror, and offering herself as a vessel, however, Yotsuyu called forth the entity in female form.

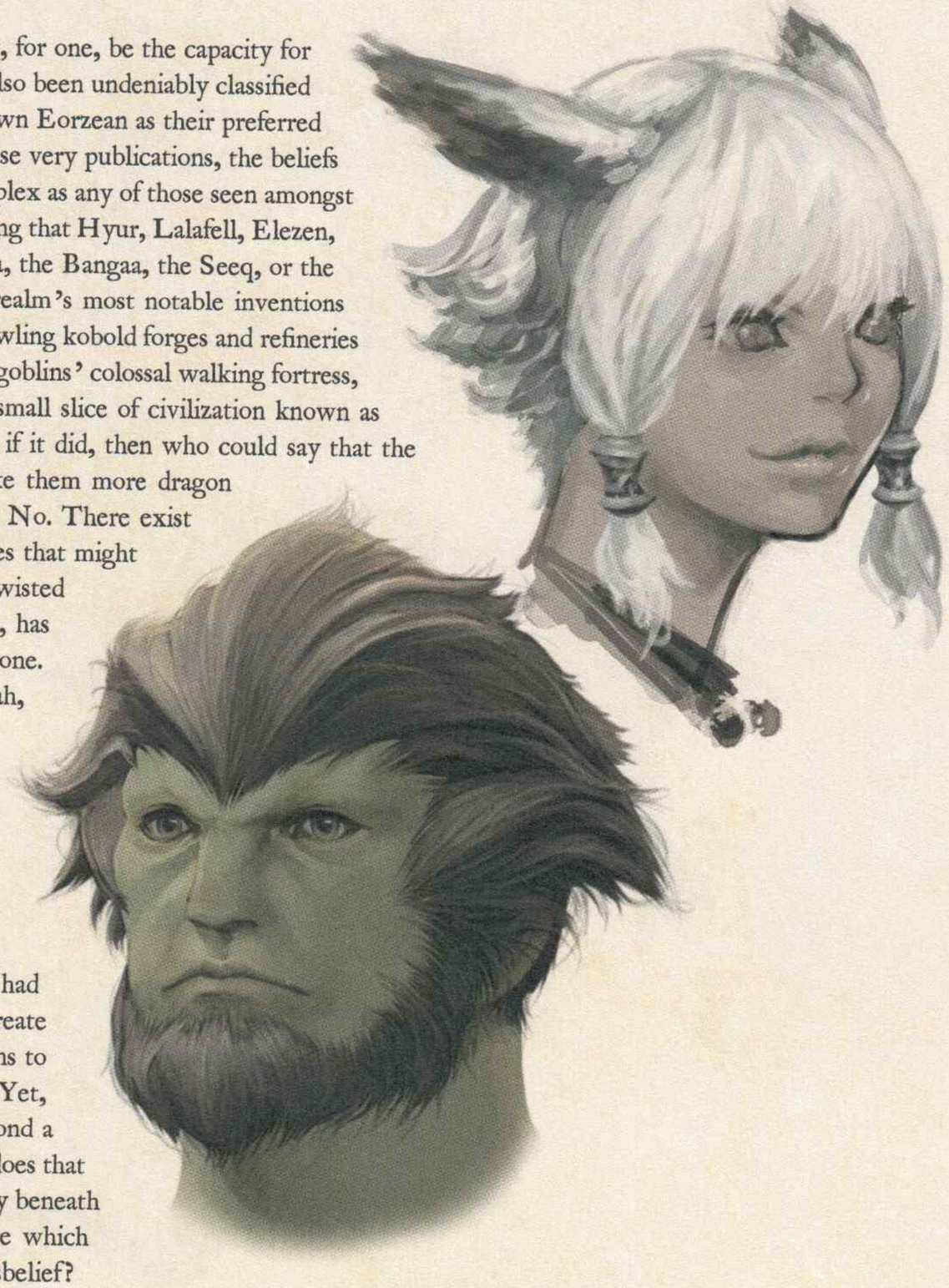
Legends state that Tsukuyomi was born from the mirrored surface of the Maso Kagami, an artifact belonging to the first gods, and thence given dominion over the night and the moon. The divinity was also charged with leading the souls of men to the underworld—a role performed in gentle quietude. Scholars muse that Tsukuyomi's calm nature was necessary to balance the tempestuous characters of Amaterasu and Susano, who likewise came into being in the age of creation. With the vengeful Yotsuyu serving as host, however, Tsukuyomi's primal incarnation was steeped in simmering malice, and could hardly be recognized as the tranquil deity of myth.

UNDEFINING BEASTMEN

Beastman—a most common term in the modern Eorzean lexicon, yet one that proves nigh impossible to define.
Why have we as Eorzeans chosen to brand a select few of Hydaelyn's children with an epithet that serves only to demean?
What is gained by drawing this line betwixt a hypothetical "us" and a "them?" Does not this line merely serve to separate us further?
To foster confusion and hate by veiling our eyes to the truth—the truth that these men we call beasts are no more beasts than we?

The Folly of Bias

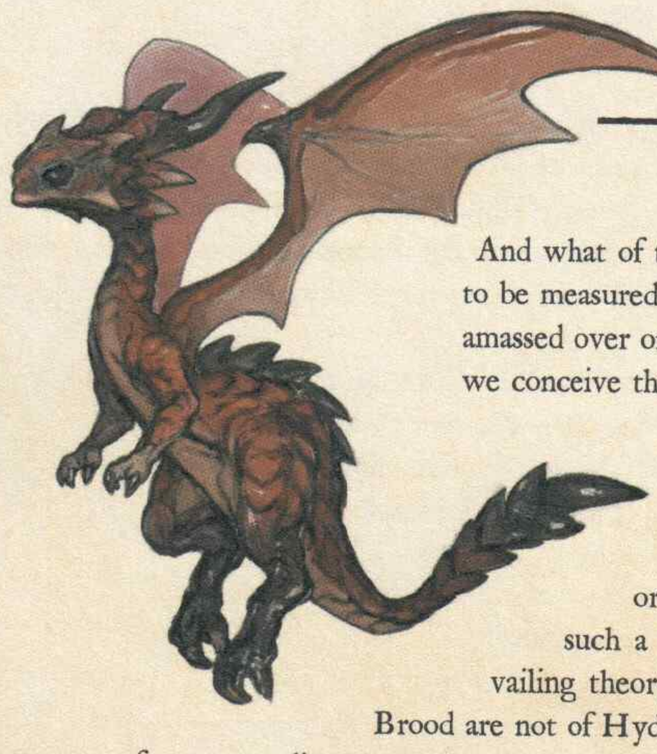
What exactly is it then that separates man from beastman? It cannot, for one, be the capacity for language, for those who make up these so-called "beast tribes" have also been undeniably classified as spoken—the sylphs and goblins having gone as far as adopting our own Eorzean as their preferred means of parlance. It cannot be culture, for as we have explored in these very publications, the beliefs and customs of these peoples are as rich as they are diverse, and as complex as any of those seen amongst the "five races" (a similarly questionable term in its own right suggesting that Hyur, Lalafell, Elezen, Miqo'te, and Roegadyn are somehow above the Garleans, the Au Ra, the Bangaa, the Seeq, or the other myriad spoken races that call Hydaelyn home). Many of the realm's most notable inventions prove the answer does not lie in a lack of skill or intelligence—the sprawling kobold forges and refineries of Vylbrand, Ixali dirigibles predating the realm's earliest airships, the goblins' colossal walking fortress, all of these arguably equal to or rivaling creations attributed to that small slice of civilization known as "mankind." Just as the answer does not lie in fairness of feature, for if it did, then who could say that the leonine Miqo'te are not beasts, or that the horns of an Au Ra make them more dragon than man? Or that a Roegadyn is but a gigas of diminutive stature? No. There exist no distinctly plausible linguistic, anthropological, or biological variances that might warrant a separate classification. Yet, one exists, and the poison of its twisted logic, conceived for the political and economic benefit of a select few, has permeated modern society, breeding animosity where there ought be none.



In the year 1559th year of the Sixth Astral Era, the sultanate of Ul'dah, under heavy influence by the Syndicate, officially coined the term "beast tribe," using it to describe those "foreign" entities whose interests directly oppose or interfere with those of the city-state. Amalj'aa were declared enemies of the people for opposing expansionist polices that saw the tribe's traditional homeland divided up by mining concerns. Citing the protection of "local interests," evictions were issued for Qiqirn, goblin, and sylph traders, and all dealings with the victims of circumstance strictly prohibited. The Syndicate had swiftly and effectively sown a national distrust in entire races so as to create a diversion that they may profit in the confusion—a distrust that remains to this day, and has become accepted amongst even our most educated. Yet, as stated above, if there truly is naught that separates our peoples beyond a term born of convenience and fostered in self-serving sanctimony, then does that not make us beasts for insisting that these, our brothers, are in some way beneath us? Are we Eorzeans so insecure that we must continue this practice which historians will almost certainly look back upon with both disgust and disbelief?

The Padjal

There are none in Eorzea so foolish as to suggest the wise Padjali leaders of Gridania might be of inferior stock. Yet if we are to compartmentalize the realm's denizens based on whether they are to be counted amongst the five races, then where does that leave the Seedseers? Their fawn-like horns, their ceased aging, their ability to commune with the elementals, are all traits more commonly associated with those peoples dishonored with the "beastman" designation.



Dragonkind

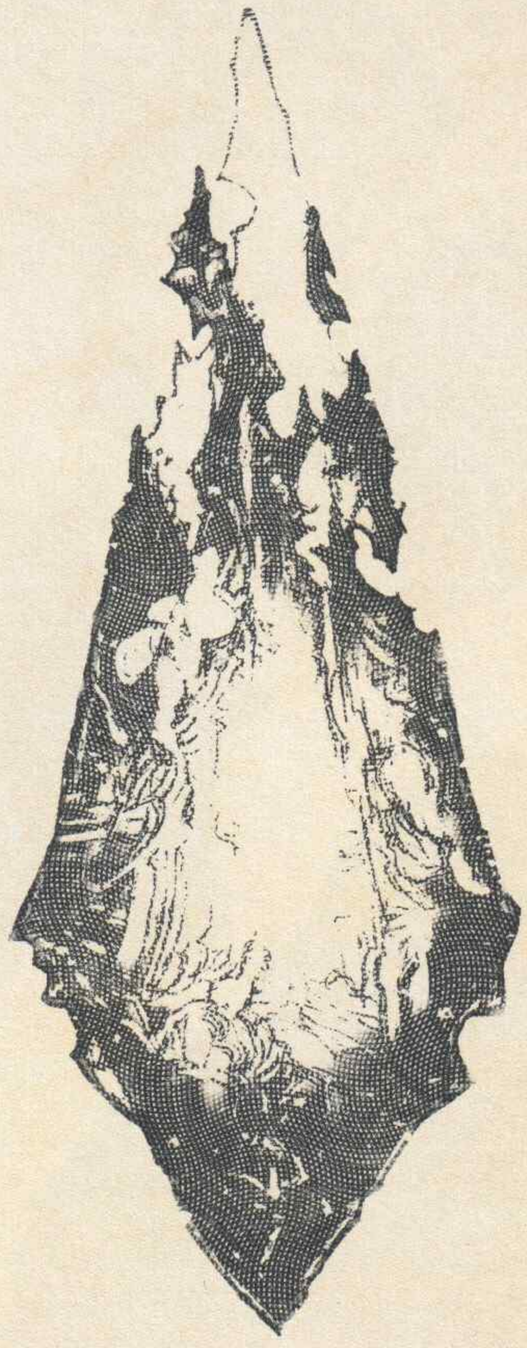
And what of the dragons? If intelligence is to be measured by the volume of knowledge amassed over one's lifetime, then how might we conceive the intelligence of one who has lived a hundred lifetimes? A thousand? And how might we even begin to claim any manner of moral or intellectual superiority over such a being? If anything, the prevailing theory that Midgardsormr's First Brood are not of Hydaelyn and came to this world from some distant star suggests that the dragons are neither man nor beastman, but instead something wholly unclassifiable by modern means.

Signed, a concerned editor.

Encyclopædia Eorzea II

BOOK VIII

HER CREATURES



BEASTKIN

One of the largest and most diverse classes, beastkin are most commonly characterized by their warm bodies and blood, their thick hair-covered hides, and the unique method by which they give birth. Many of the more docile beastkin take well to domestication and can be raised for labor or food, but most treat man as they would any other competitive species—as a threat that must needs be quelled.

Vanara

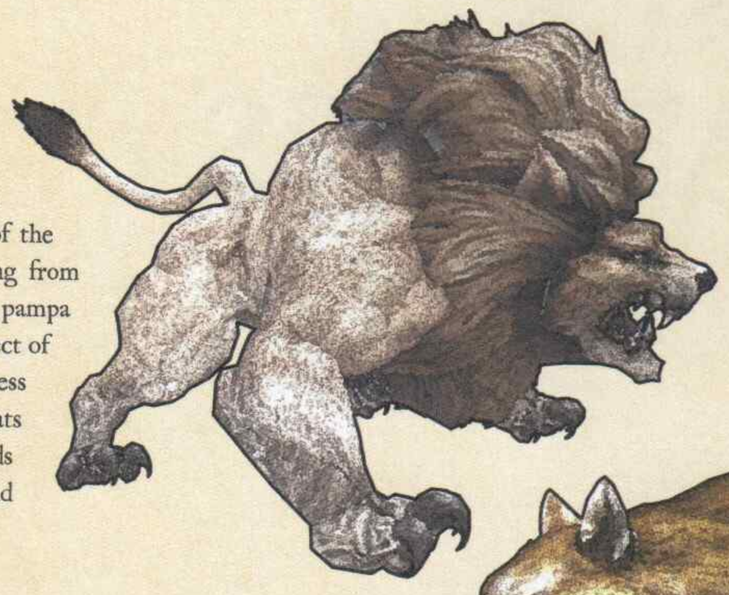
"In the society of the vanara, the scrabble to win the throne of alpha male is an exceptionally violent one. So ferocious are these battles for supremacy that the death of one or both combatants is not an uncommon outcome. As such, young vanara will often leave the group for a time, and seek a solitary existence to improve their instincts for survival."

- Clan Centurio Hunter-scholar
Hersande the Heavy-handed

Grizzly Bear

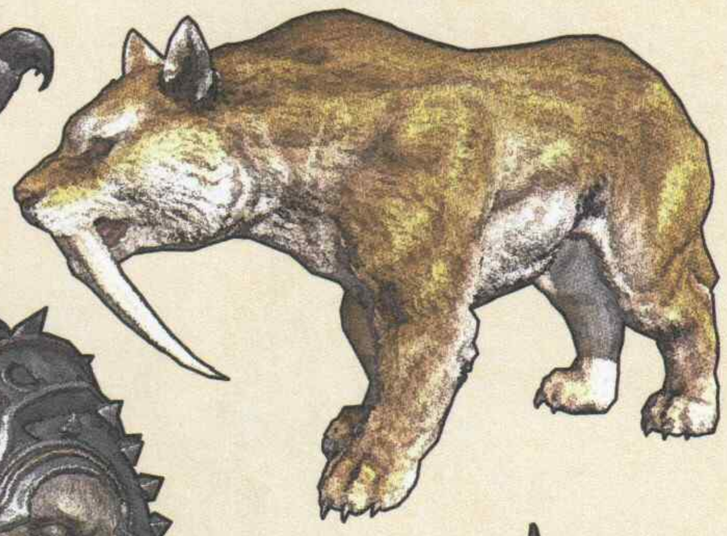
Deep within the primeval forests of eastern Abalathia's Spine does the most violent of bears dwell—the mountain grizzly. Cloaked in fur as dark as night, this voracious beast will stalk the banks of the Velodyna in search of anything it might consume, from spawning salmon to berries to even carrion, depending on the prevailing season.

Lion



The lion's golden coat and regal stature have earned this apex predator the title "king of the jungle," despite its hailing from the markedly jungle-free pampa of southern Ilsabard. Subject of countless legends, its likeness can be found on the coats of arms of houses in lands as far away as Ishgard and Garlemald.

Sabertooth Tiger



Equipped with a pair of massive curved fangs used to impale its victims, the sabertooth tiger is one of Ilsabard's most ferocious and deadly hunters. And while many of the Azim Steppe's Xaela have come to fear the baras—another name for the beast—there are a handful of tribes that set aside this fear for an opportunity to prove their worth.

Canis Pugnax

For centuries, remote tribes from Ilsabard's eastern fringes have trained hounds to fight the terrible creatures that roam the continent's darker corners. Recognizing opportunity in this violent tradition, the Imperial Garlean Army has followed suit, establishing their own breeding programs using pups commandeered in the name of the Emperor.

Gulo Gulo

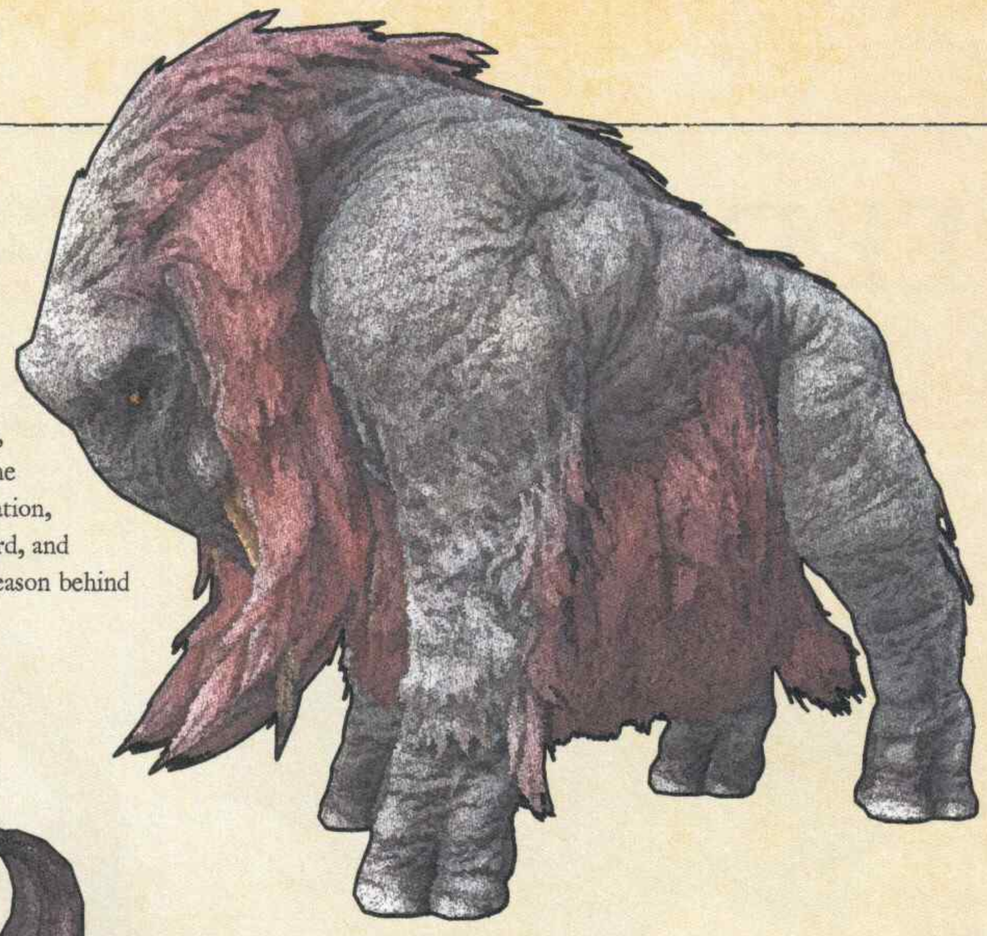
Despite bearing a striking resemblance to the miacid, this quick-tempered carnivore has proven a far greater bane to the inhabitants of the Azim Steppe, preying on the very livestock that sustains so many of its nomadic peoples. It is widely believed that the domestication of yol began in an attempt by Xaela tribes to control the gulo gulo population.

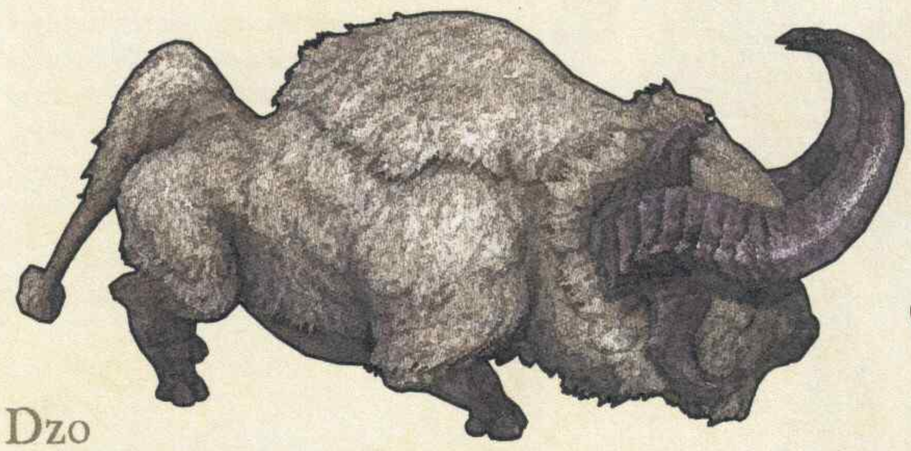
Mammoth

These lumbering, herbivorous beastkin inhabit chilly plains and snowy mountainsides, protected from the elements by thick matted hides. Ordinarily placid in temperament, mammoths are known to become aggressive if startled, thrashing about with their long, curved tusks. Even the largest of predators will give these creatures a wide berth, preferring to avoid the risk of injury or death.

Garula

For centuries, it was believed that the Garula was a single, undying entity, descended from a marid blessed by the gods, as no more than one of the massive creatures were ever seen together—if ever seen at all. Recent observation, however, has proven a small, if scattered, population exists throughout Othard, and that the extreme territoriality of both males and females is most likely the reason behind the misunderstanding.



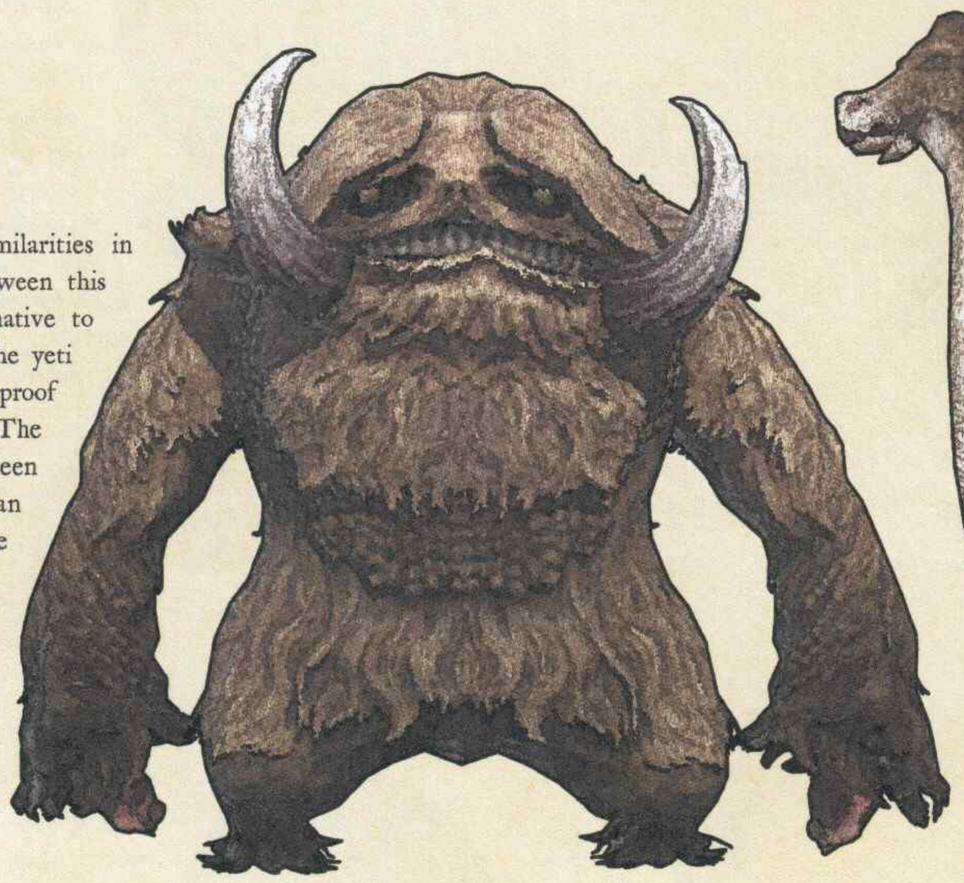


Dzo

One of Othard's most prevalent ruminants, the dzo is an integral part of life on the Azim Steppe. Its meat will feed a tribe for weeks; its blood and milk, slake their thirst. The hides will keep a tribe warm and out of the elements, while its bones will become their tools and weapons. There is much truth to the claim that no part of a dzo goes unused.

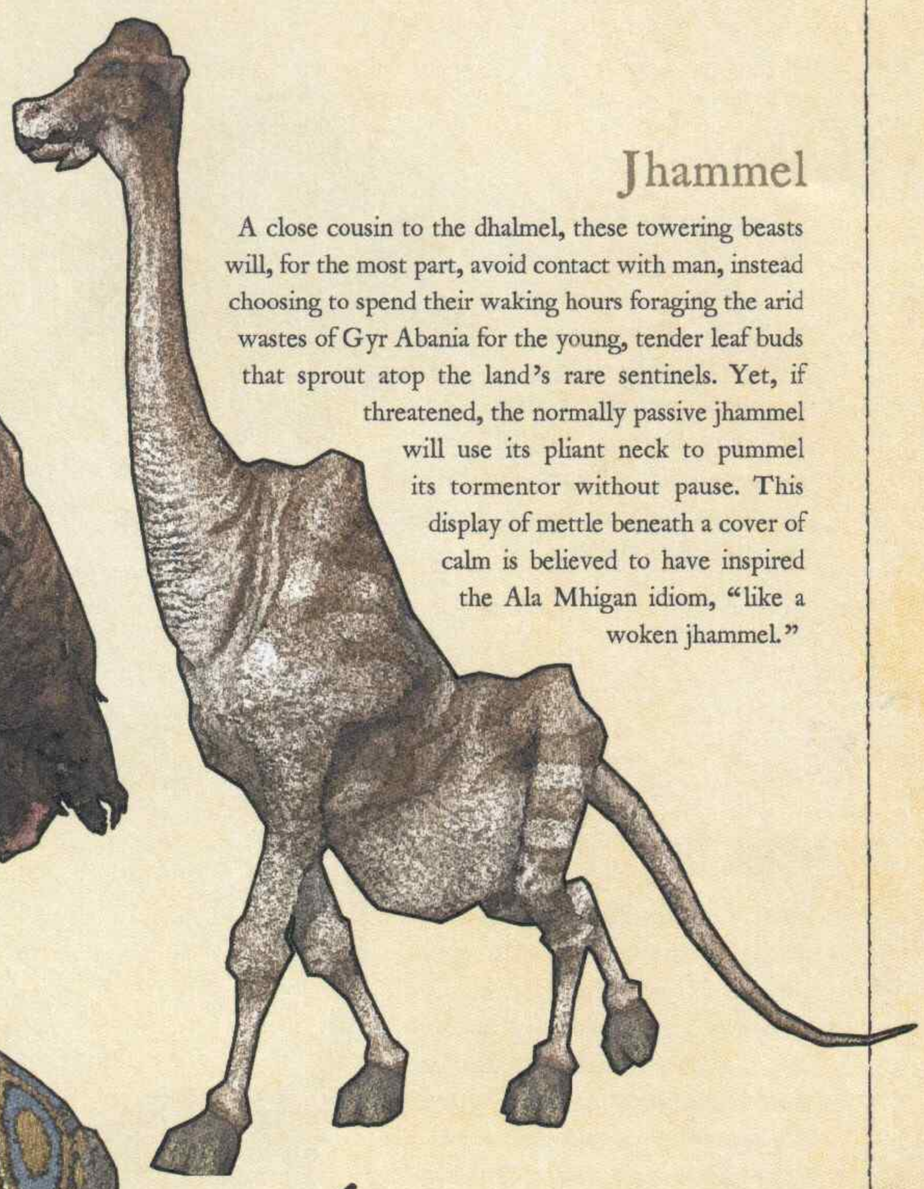
Gedan

Found in nearly all the eastern continent's climes, the gedan of Othard rarely allow a relatively small stature to prevent them from subduing their prey of choice. The voracious beasts will travel in tight packs of ten to thirty, using their numbers to overwhelm creatures often more than five times their size. The gedan are also known for their acute sense of smell, a claim to which many a steppe hunter will attest, having lost his prize soon after bleeding the catch.



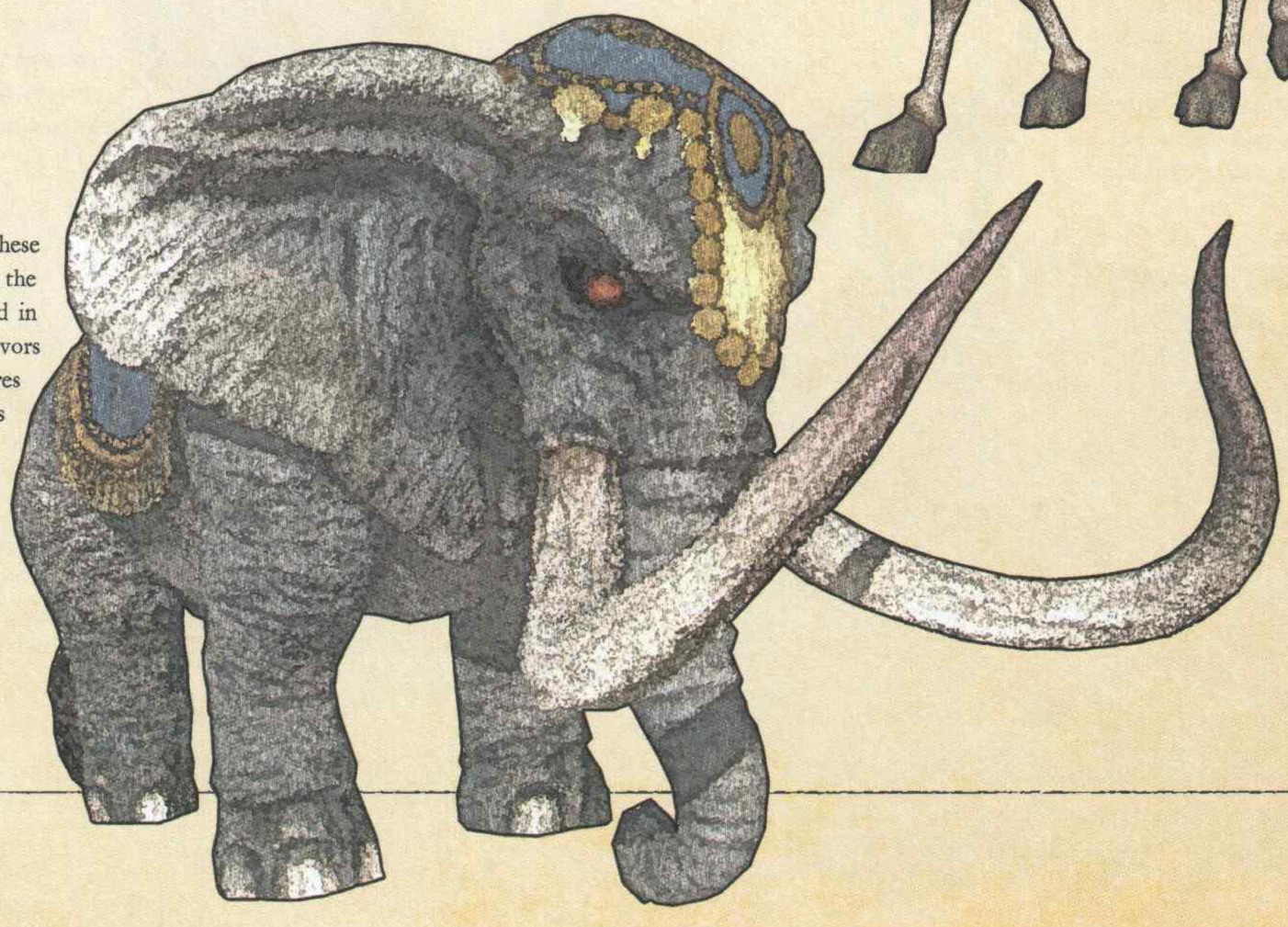
Manzasiri

Scholars point to similarities in build and behavior between this rare bipedal beastkin native to the Azim Steppe and the yeti of Abalathia's Spine as proof of a common ancestor. The manzasiri have long been prevalent in Yanxian legend, where they are called by their traditional name "mada" and are portrayed as ravenous demons who steal and hoard the eyes of children who misbehave.



Jhammel

A close cousin to the dhalmel, these towering beasts will, for the most part, avoid contact with man, instead choosing to spend their waking hours foraging the arid wastes of Gyr Abania for the young, tender leaf buds that sprout atop the land's rare sentinels. Yet, if threatened, the normally passive jhammel will use its pliant neck to pummel its tormentor without pause. This display of mettle beneath a cover of calm is believed to have inspired the Ala Mhigan idiom, "like a woken jhammel."

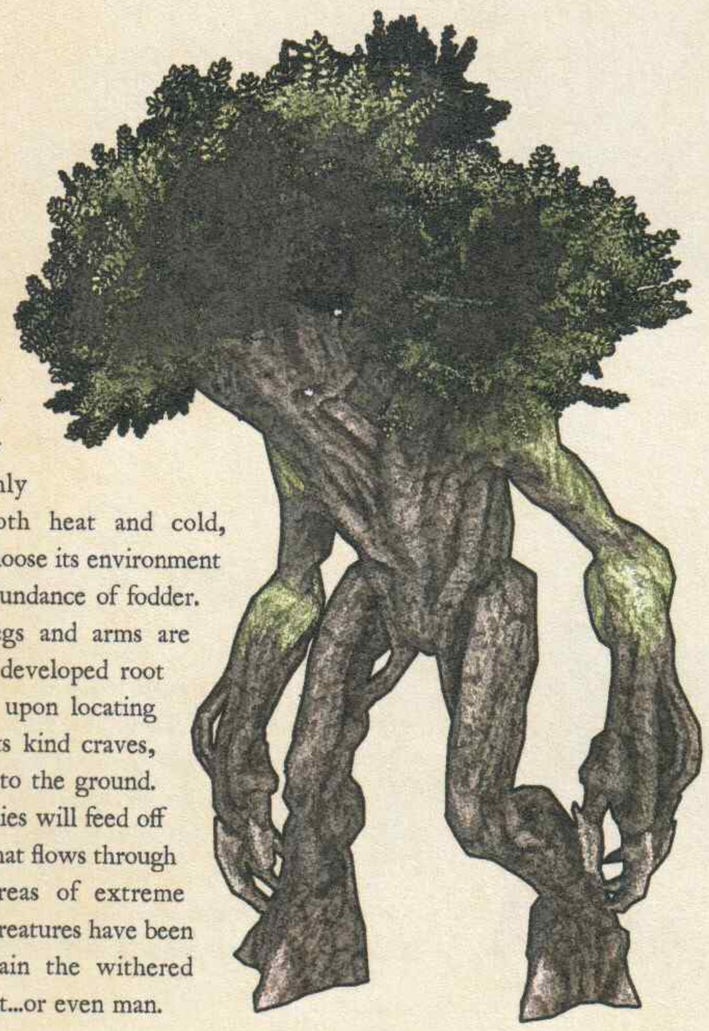


Marid

Since ancient times have these tusked quadrupeds native to the arid Near East been utilized in both war and trade—endeavors that saw many of the creatures introduced to the mountains of Gyr Abania, where they thrived under the care of skilled Ananta beastmaids.

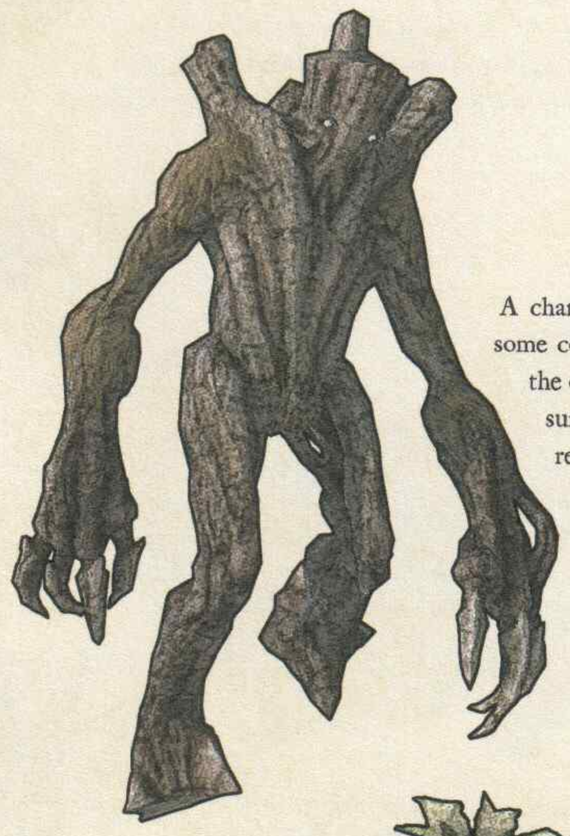
SEEDKIN

To be classified as seedkin, flora must exhibit the capacity for controlled mobility with the purpose of hunting, defense, or reproduction. Their similarity in appearance to conventional plants can prevent travelers and botanists from properly identifying possible threats while afield. Careful review of this publication is strongly recommended to those considering an extended foray into the wilderness, be it lush or barren.



Leshy

The body of this ambulatory seedkin is highly resistant to both heat and cold, allowing it to choose its environment based on the abundance of fodder. Its so-called legs and arms are actually highly developed root systems which, upon locating the rich loam its kind craves, can be thrust into the ground. While most leshies will feed off the life energy that flows through the land, in areas of extreme desolation, the creatures have been observed to drain the withered carcass of a beast...or even man.

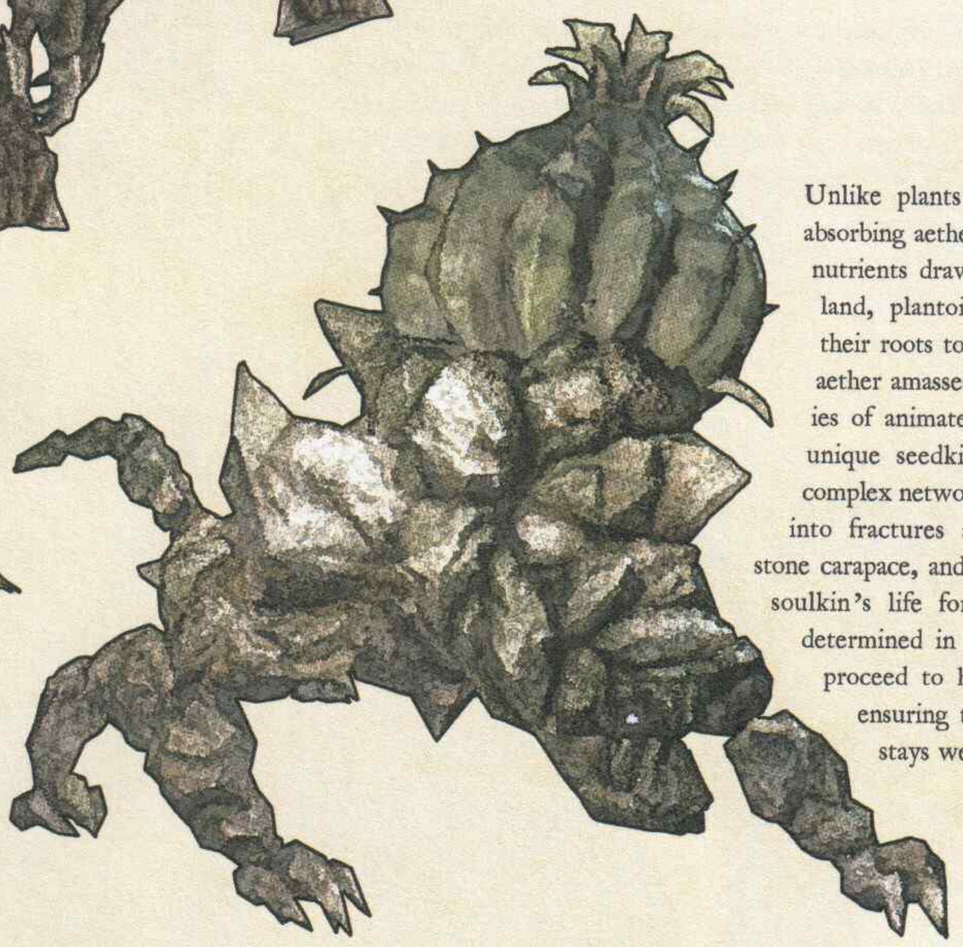


Kaluk

A chance encounter with an invasive funguar some countless centuries ago granted one leshy the opportunity to abandon its reliance on the sun's blessing for nourishment, and instead replenish its vigor through means of rot and decay. Since then, the offspring of the kaluk have thrived where death has its strongest hold.

Halgai

Long have the Xaela tribes of the Azim Steppe believed the undeniably verdant halgai to be of the seedkin—the very word "halgai" meaning "scrub that walks." Sharlayan naturalists, however, are quick to disagree, insisting instead that they are obviously naught but elemental phurbles over-aspected to wind.



Plantoid

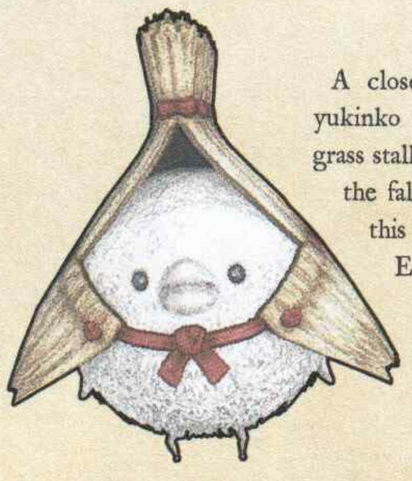
Unlike plants that survive by absorbing aether from water and nutrients drawn from the very land, plantoids have adapted their roots to tap into the raw aether amassed within the bodies of animated golems. These unique seedkin will extend a complex network of fibrous roots into fractures along a golem's stone carapace, and slowly drain the soulkin's life force. The golem, determined in its survival, will proceed to hunt more often, ensuring the plantoid, too, stays well nourished.

Chichu

Early observations of how the chichu deftly used its vines to guide prey into its maw-like digestive cavity led scholars to believe that the flora was a distant relative to Eorzea's ochu. More recent studies have shown this hypothesis to hold little merit, yet the species's name remains unchanged.

Mossling

Appearing as little more than mossy spheres with legs, these seedkin are fond of wetlands and humid climes. Mosslings are highly active when moisture is abundant, but exhibit a tendency to huddle together in damp clumps when dry weather threatens, presumably in an effort to prevent unwanted evaporation.



Yukinko

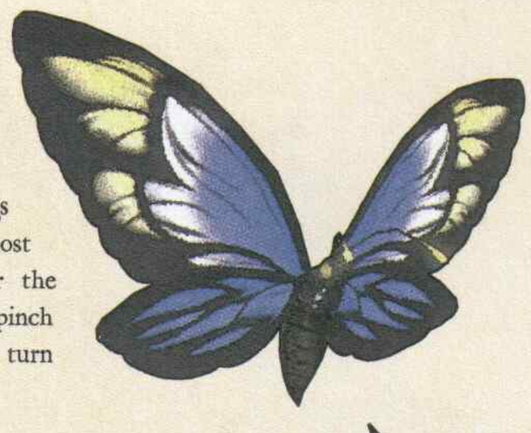
A close relative of the korpokkur, the yukinko covers itself with a pointed hat of grass stalks to protect itself from the cold and the falling snow. Known as "wintering," this behavior has been mimicked by Far Eastern gardeners as a means of sheltering their own vulnerable trees and shrubs from the elements.

Vilekin

As is suggested by the name, vilekin consist of all manner of worms and pests, be they terrestrial or winged. One unique characteristic of creatures falling into this class is the coloring of their exoskeletons. From subtle earthen tones to help a tiny beetle blend in with its environment, to bright yellows and greens to cozen would-be predators into believing their meal poisonous, vilekin come in a veritable rainbow of hues.

Fluturini

Woe betide the fool drawn to the beauty of the fluturini, for upon those gossamer wings of violet and topaz lies the most deadly of poisons. Yet, for the enterprising alchemist, but a pinch of this prismatic pigment can turn a tidy profit.

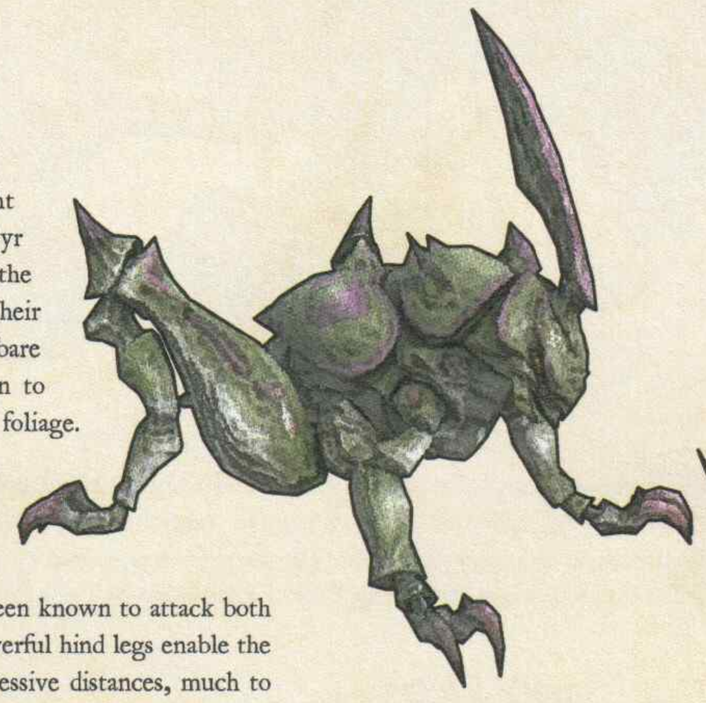


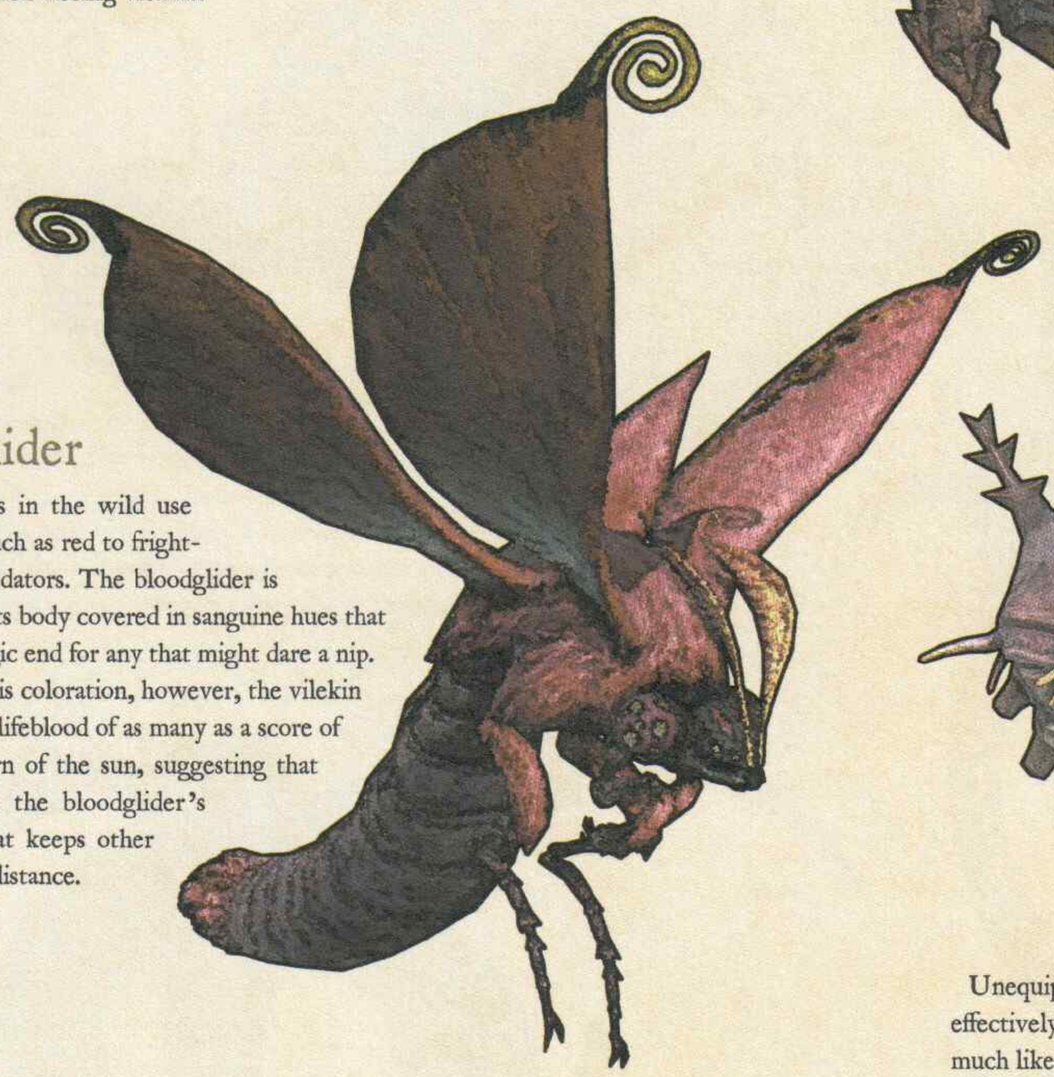
Lava Scorpion

Long have naturalists debated as to the origins of scorpions. Some claim that they were once dwellers of the sea, citing similarities in anatomy to crabs and yabbies. Others take the opposite approach, insisting that these similarities suggest it was the wavekin who descended from the scorpions, the heat-resistant armor shared by all proving a common origin in flame.

Chapuli

A common sight in the wilds of Gyr Abania, chapulis use the blade-like horn on their heads to strip plants bare before settling down to feast on the fallen foliage. Though primarily herbivores, they display surprising savagery when agitated, and have been known to attack both men and beasts. Powerful hind legs enable the chapuli to leap impressive distances, much to the dismay of their fleeing victims.





Bloodglider

Many species in the wild use bright colors such as red to frighten or warn predators. The bloodglider is no exception, its body covered in sanguine hues that forewarn a tragic end for any that might dare a nip. To maintain this coloration, however, the vilekin must drain the lifeblood of as many as a score of beasts each turn of the sun, suggesting that it may not be the bloodglider's color alone that keeps other creatures at a distance.

Eruca

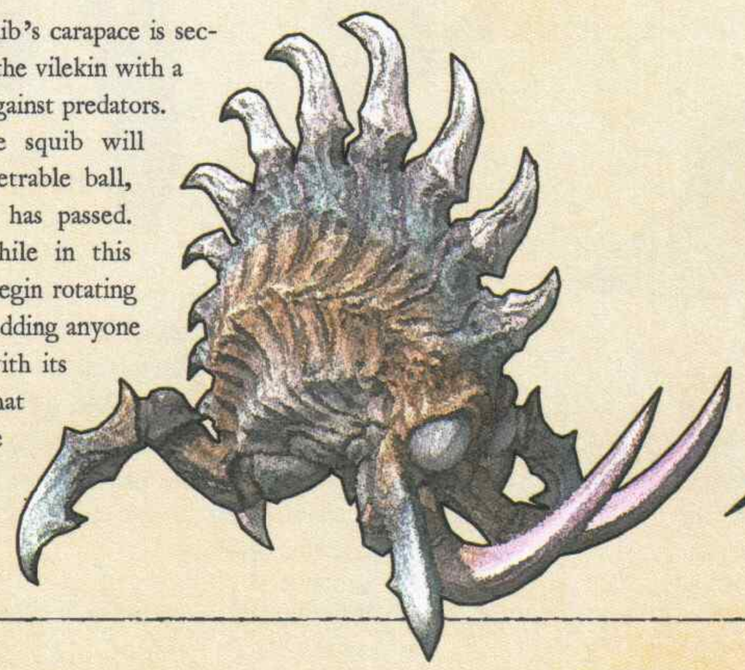
Whereas many vilekin undergo a metamorphosis as they step into adulthood—sprouting wings like the wamouracampa or forming a carapace like the ladybug—some retain their grotesque wormlike forms until death. The eruca is one such creature, the earthen hues of its thick, leathery skin providing sufficient camouflage from hungry predators.

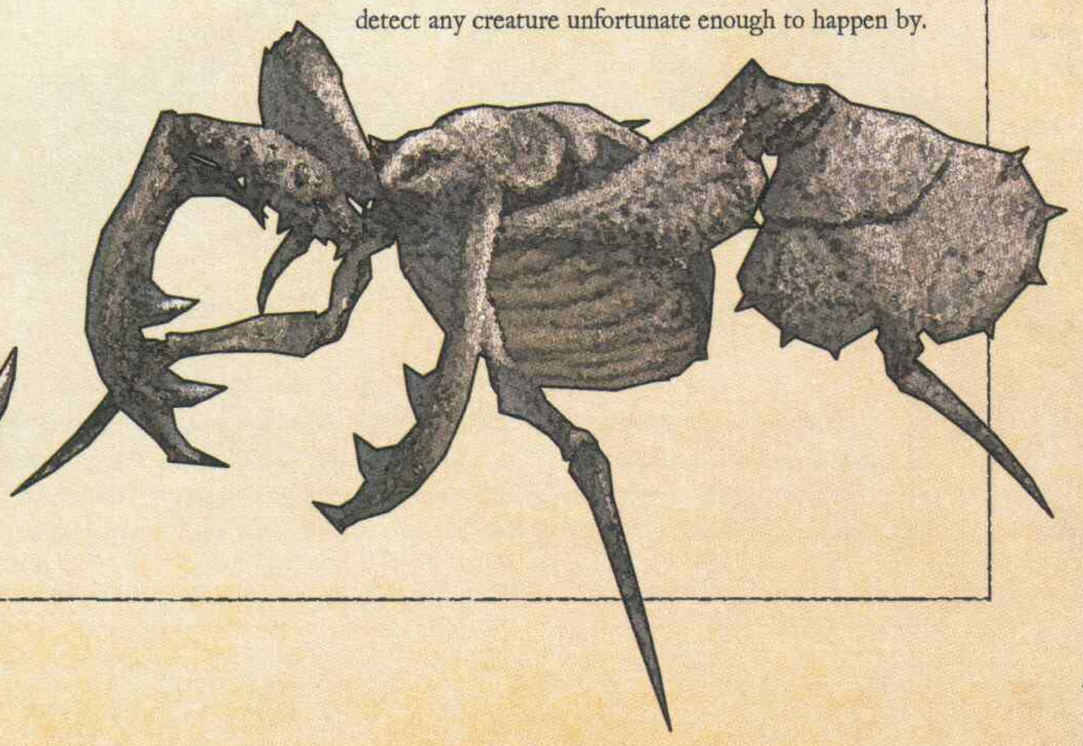
Antlion

Unequipped for digging, antlions will instead rapidly vibrate their legs, effectively reducing the soil beneath their feet into a fine grain that acts much like a liquid. It is into this newly formed "pool" that the vilekin will sink its body, covering all but the tips of its antennae, which it then uses to detect any creature unfortunate enough to happen by.

Squib

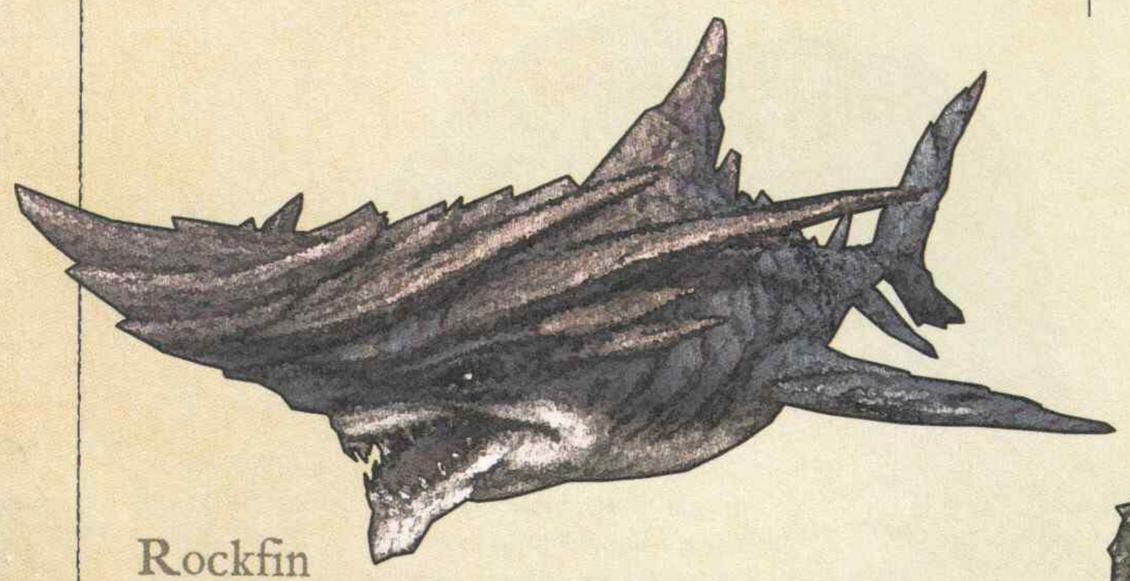
The hardness of a squib's carapace is second to none, providing the vilekin with a most effective defense against predators. When threatened, the squib will roll into a nigh-impenetrable ball, and wait until danger has passed. If further agitated while in this spherical state, it will begin rotating at a blinding speed, shredding anyone and anything nearby with its spiked shell—a habit that surprisingly, despite the threat it poses, can benefit the environment by aerating soil.





Wavekin

The defining characteristic of a member of the wavekin is its uncanny ability to breathe while underwater, be it for limited duration, such as is the case with amphibious toads and efts, or for the entirety of its lifespan, as is the case with most fish and cephalopods. Creatures in this class can also be extremely selective when it comes to the type of water they choose for their habitat—some preferring fresh streams, some salt-rich seas, while still others the brackish whorls where the twain meet.



Rockfin

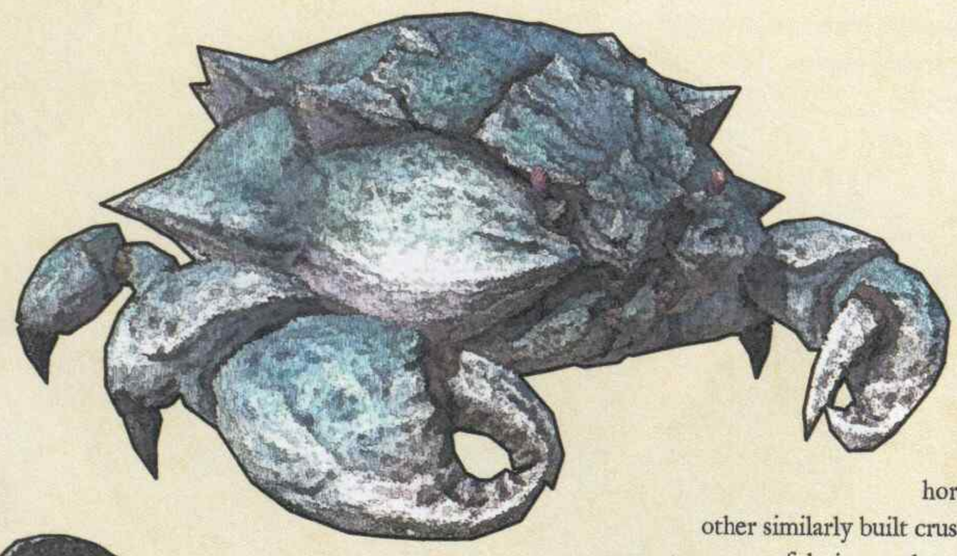
Known as a "flying shark" in the Far East, the rockfin employs an elastic bladder filled with lighter-than-air vapors to grant it a temporary means of flight. To subdue its prey, the shark will pummel it with its rigid dorsal fin, looking to stun the creature, at which time it will use its countless rows of razor-sharp teeth to complete the bloody business.

Coralshell

For many years, scholars believed these creatures to simply be megalocrabs upon whose shells coral had naturally taken root. However, extensive observation by a pair of Hingan naturalists has come to see those claims disproven. The coral is transplanted by the crabs from reefs onto their shells, where it is "cultivated" into a camouflage that aids the wavekin in hunting.

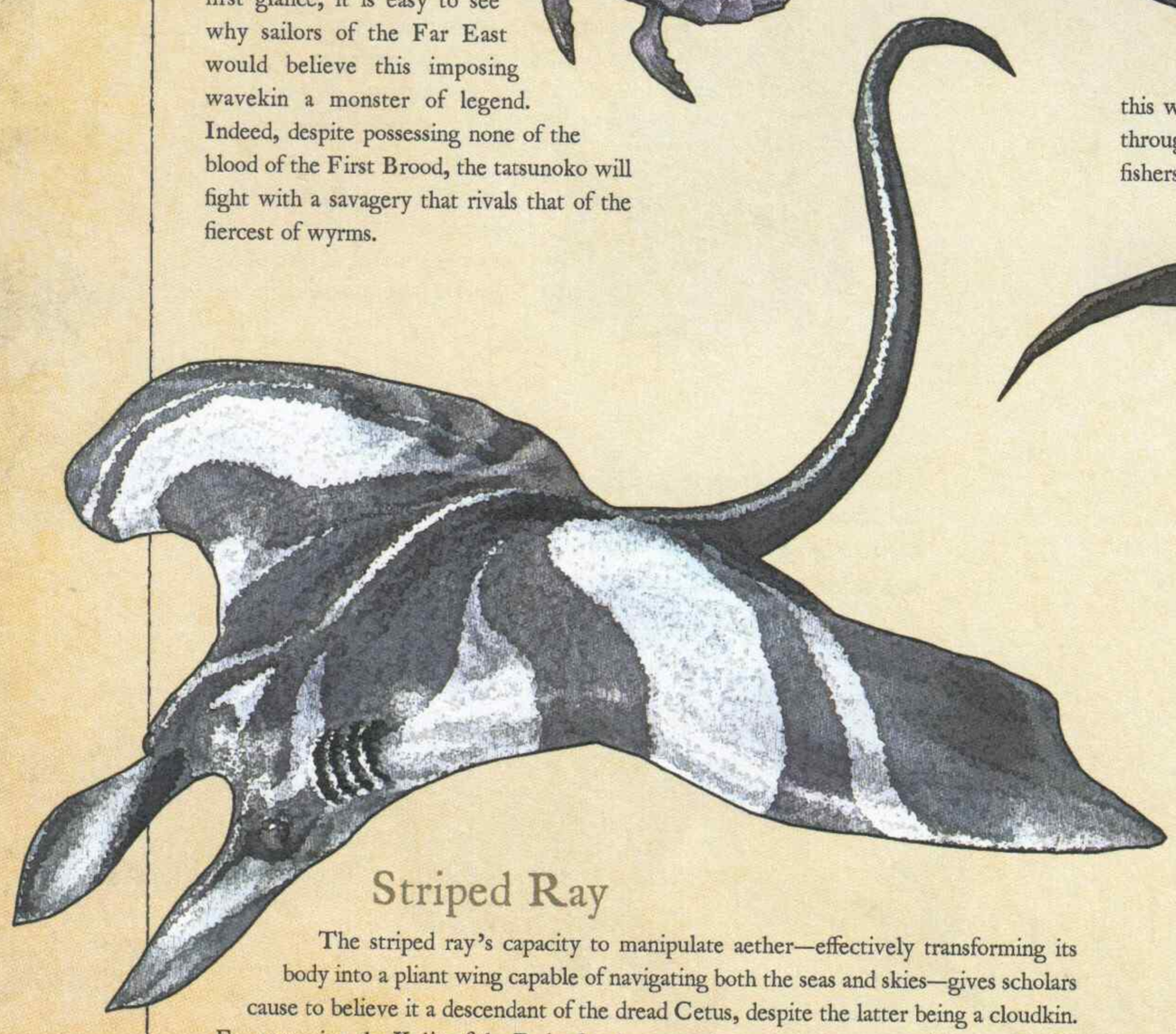
Tatsunoko

"Tatsunoko" is Hingan for "dragon's whelp"—and at first glance, it is easy to see why sailors of the Far East would believe this imposing wavekin a monster of legend. Indeed, despite possessing none of the blood of the First Brood, the tatsunoko will fight with a savagery that rivals that of the fiercest of wyrms.



Unkiu

More akin to a horseshoe crab than other similarly built crustaceans, the unkiu possesses two powerful pincers that can crack the very shell of a yumemi—a mollusk that just so happens to be this wavekin's favorite meal. Unfortunately, such strength means it can also slice through cording, wood, and metal plating with relative ease, causing headaches for fishers and sailors alike.



Striped Ray

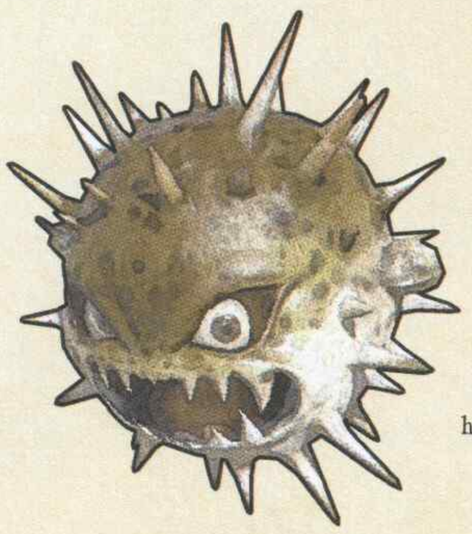
The striped ray's capacity to manipulate aether—effectively transforming its body into a pliant wing capable of navigating both the seas and skies—gives scholars cause to believe it a descendant of the dread Cetus, despite the latter being a cloudkin. For centuries, the Kojin of the Ruby Sea have sought to take advantage of this remarkable trait, and have worked to domesticate the creatures for use in transport and logistics.

Sea Monk

Since man took to the sea have there been tales of eight-legged monsters rising from the deep to tear ships asunder and devour their hapless crews. Yet in every tale there is some truth, and any sailor who dares brave the endless blue should learn quick to fear the sea monk, lest he be dragged down into the darkness himself. Hingans use the word "tako," or octopus, to describe the wavekin, but scholars suggest the creature may be more closely related to a squid.

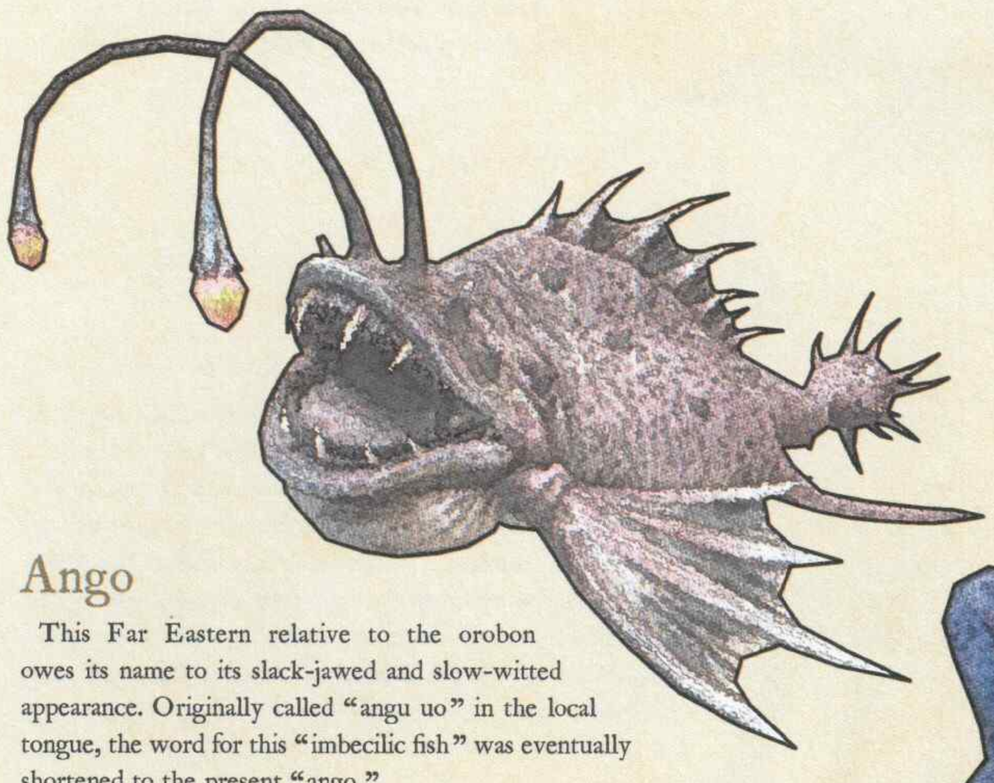
Gyuki

These barrel-like pinnipeds (called ruszors in the West) spend much of their lives gorging themselves on fish and other marine life. As such, some males can grow as heavy as two and a half tonzes. Most of this weight is attributed to fat which helps insulate the wavekin from the freezing winds of the northern seas—their preferred habitat. However, lack of prey will sometimes see huddles of the gyuki make the long journey south to the abundant waters of the Ruby Tide.



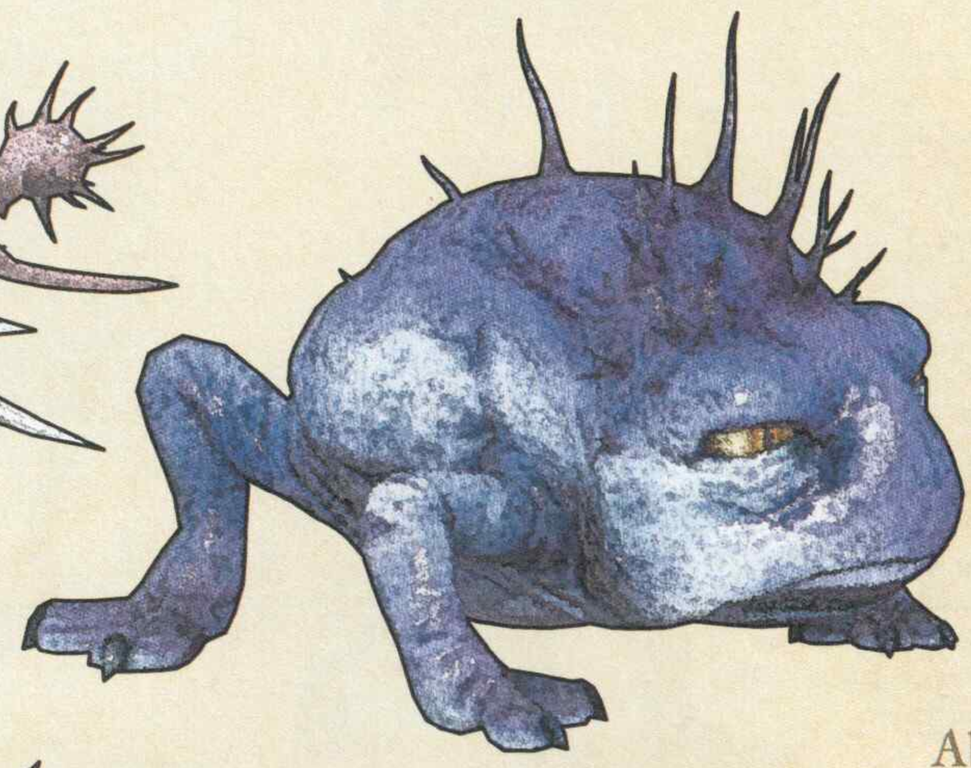
Bombfish

When excited, these fish will bloat their bodies full of water or air, more than doubling in size and sending once-retracted spines erect. When sailors from the West first witnessed these Far Eastern marvels, they were immediately reminded of the voidsent bombs which had harried them back home, and thusly dubbed them bombfish.



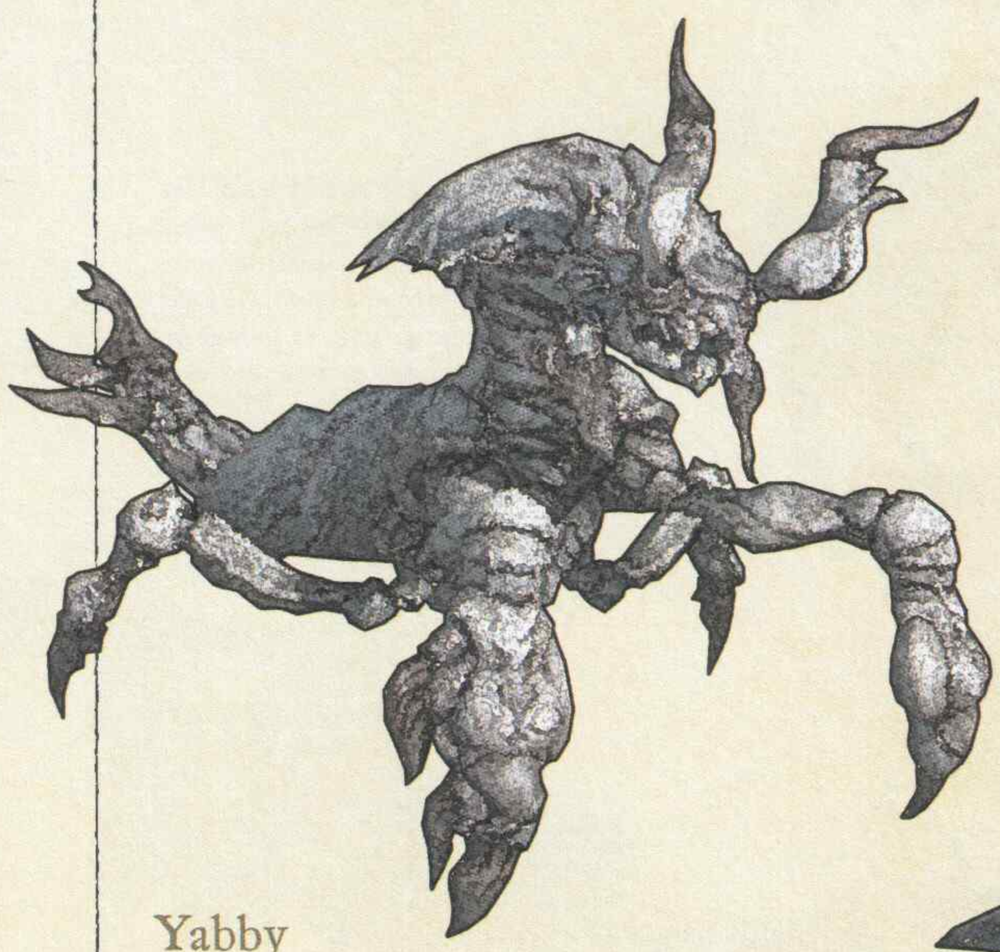
Ango

This Far Eastern relative to the orobon owes its name to its slack-jawed and slow-witted appearance. Originally called "angu uo" in the local tongue, the word for this "imbecilic fish" was eventually shortened to the present "ango."



Abaddon

The harsh environment of Gyr Abania's wind-blasted wastes has seen only the deadliest of creatures thrive. Where in other regions of Eorzea, simply the size of a gigantoad is sufficient to deter predators, amongst the jagged peaks of Abalathia's Spine the wavekin must rely on more. After centuries of natural selection, now only the abaddons remain—toads so swollen with toxins, it has turned their very skin the color of death. Long have the Ala Mhigans made use of this trait, extracting the poison for use on their arrows and daggers.



Yabby

Like many of the wavekin living in Loch Seld, the yabby is also believed to be the descendant of a sea-dwelling creature that migrated to the mountains during the great flood that ended the Fifth Astral Era, and then was trapped when the waters receded. A diamond-like shell protects the yabby...but only if it remains upright. Flip the creature over, and its butter-soft belly will be exposed, spelling almost certain doom.

Salt Swallow

Also known by loch fishers as "blue angels," it was most likely the similarity their billowing fin-like appendages have to birds' wings that earned the salt swallows their name. There are some, however, who would have us believe it is another manner of "swallow" from which the name originates—these wavekin, it seems, cannot be bothered to chew their prey, and instead elect to devour their meals whole.

Cloudkin

The foremost feature that defines all cloudkin is the capacity for flight, be it wing-, aether-, or gas-assisted. Since time immemorial has man looked to make use of this unique trait, training birds of all shapes and sizes to follow him into both war and the wild—an endeavor not limited to the cultures of the West, but practiced the world round.

Gagana

For generations, farmers have sought to domesticate this sizable cloudkin, its meat lean, its eggs large, and its feathers soft and plentiful. However, other than a few isolated (and highly disputed) cases of successful imprinting immediately after hatching, all attempts have ended in failure—the worst cases resulting in the goring of the farmer.

Ruby Hornbill

While on one hand the Hingans believe the brilliant ruby hornbill a servant of their sun deity, Amaterasu, this does not deter them from capturing the birds en masse and training them to perform in plays and grotesqueries.

True Griffin

Those who dare claim this noble beast naught but a griffin stricken with a case of albinism, do so at their own peril, for to speak ill of the creature will see thee forever an enemy of Ala Mhigo. To the Ala Mhigans, the true griffin is a symbol of unity and strength—a trait displayed in the fact that after coupling, a pair will remain together for life.

Red Chocobo

Seeking to enhance a chocobo's worth on the battlefield, Hannish alchemists concocted a devilish brew that would stimulate the birds' sanguine humours, thus igniting the fire-aspected aether slumbering in their veins. According to the alchemists, it would grant the cloudkin the ability to rain powerful magicks upon their enemies—and it did. However, it also made the chocobos overly excitable, resulting in the escape of nearly all their stock—stock that soon grew feral.

Falcon

Long have falcons of the Far East been bred for both battle and transport—those houses having taken to their training rising to an almost unmatched prestige. Once a luxury only afforded by the noble classes, now falcons are available throughout Hingashi and Doma, and even the darksome reaches of the Azim Steppe.

Muu Shuwuu

On the steppe, there are few places to hide—something the muu shuwuu uses to its advantage while on the hunt. Once a potential meal has been spotted, this tenacious bird of prey will circle above for hours, waiting for even the slightest lapse in the hunted's concentration, at which time the muu will dive at impossible speed and snatch up its quarry with talons strong enough to lift a dzo.

Yol

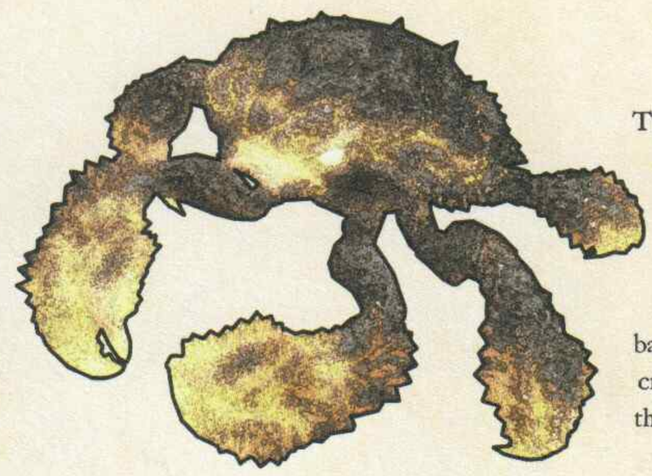
These carnivorous cloudkin native to Othard's Tail Mountains possess the uncanny ability to bend wind-aspected aether to their wills, allowing for not only increased speed, but increased strength—a blast of concentrated gale force from its wings capable of upending a potential target before the yol need even approach it.

Scalekin

All members of this class bear tough, scaly hides that serve as armor to protect their bodies from the claws and jaws of hungry predators. That said, most all scalekin are, in fact, better defined by their subclasses, the most popular being cloudkin and wavekin—many of the latter possessing shells that, over centuries of development, have become resistant to the extreme temperatures of Hydaelyn's magmatic lifeblood.

Lavashell

Though generally smaller than a lava crab, the lavashell carries protection against the extreme environment of Hells' Lid similar to that of its cousin. Yet, the similarities end here, with the biological differences between the two species ultimately proving like night and day. Most Hingans, however, do not distinguish between the two scalekin—a classification begrudgingly assigned because of their habitat rather than physiology—electing to call both simply "gasame."

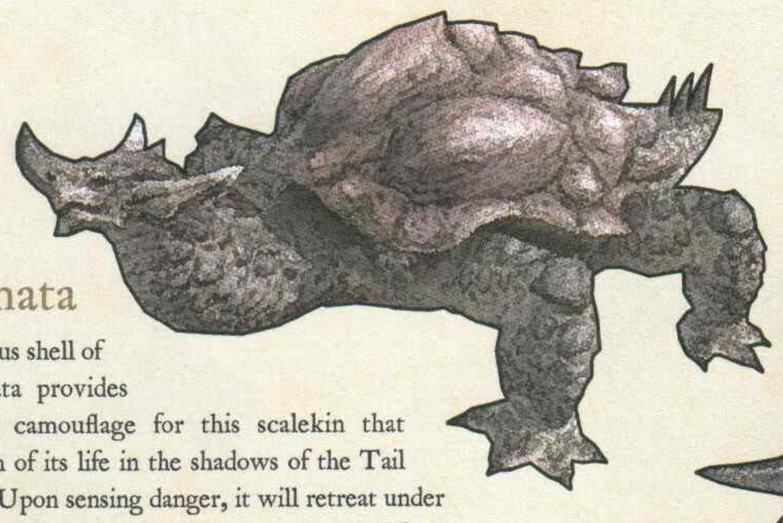


Lava Crab

The lava crab is not born with a heat-resistant shell. After they hatch, a mother will take her spawn to the inner chambers of Hells' Lid, where bubbles bursting on pools of magma will send drops of molten rock through the air and onto the fledgling crabs' backs. Over time, this rock slowly builds up, creating a shield not only to the heat, but to the swords and clubs of overeager adventurers.

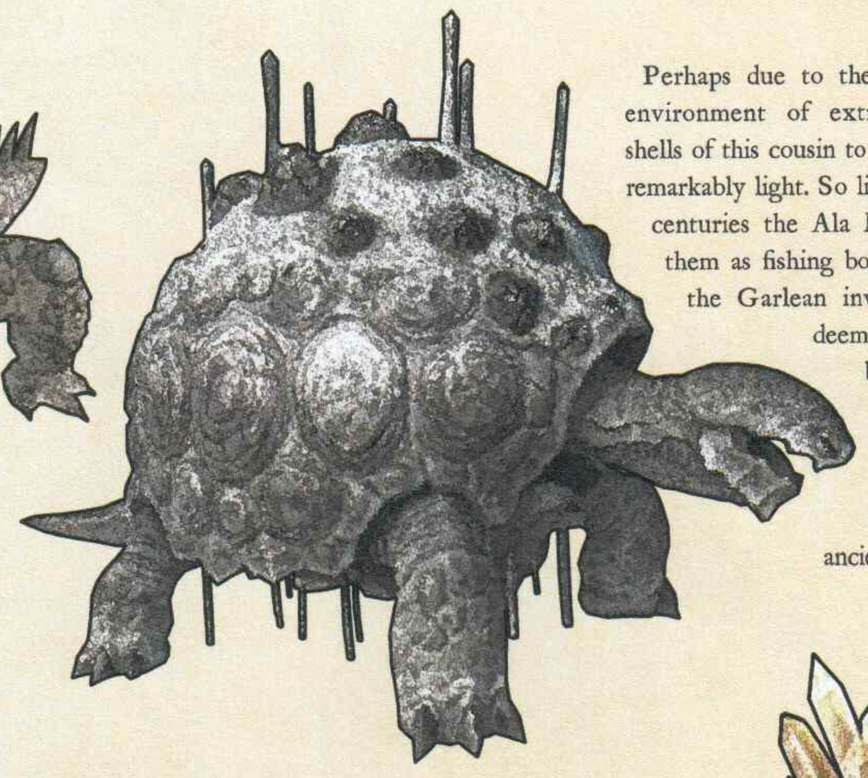
Chelone

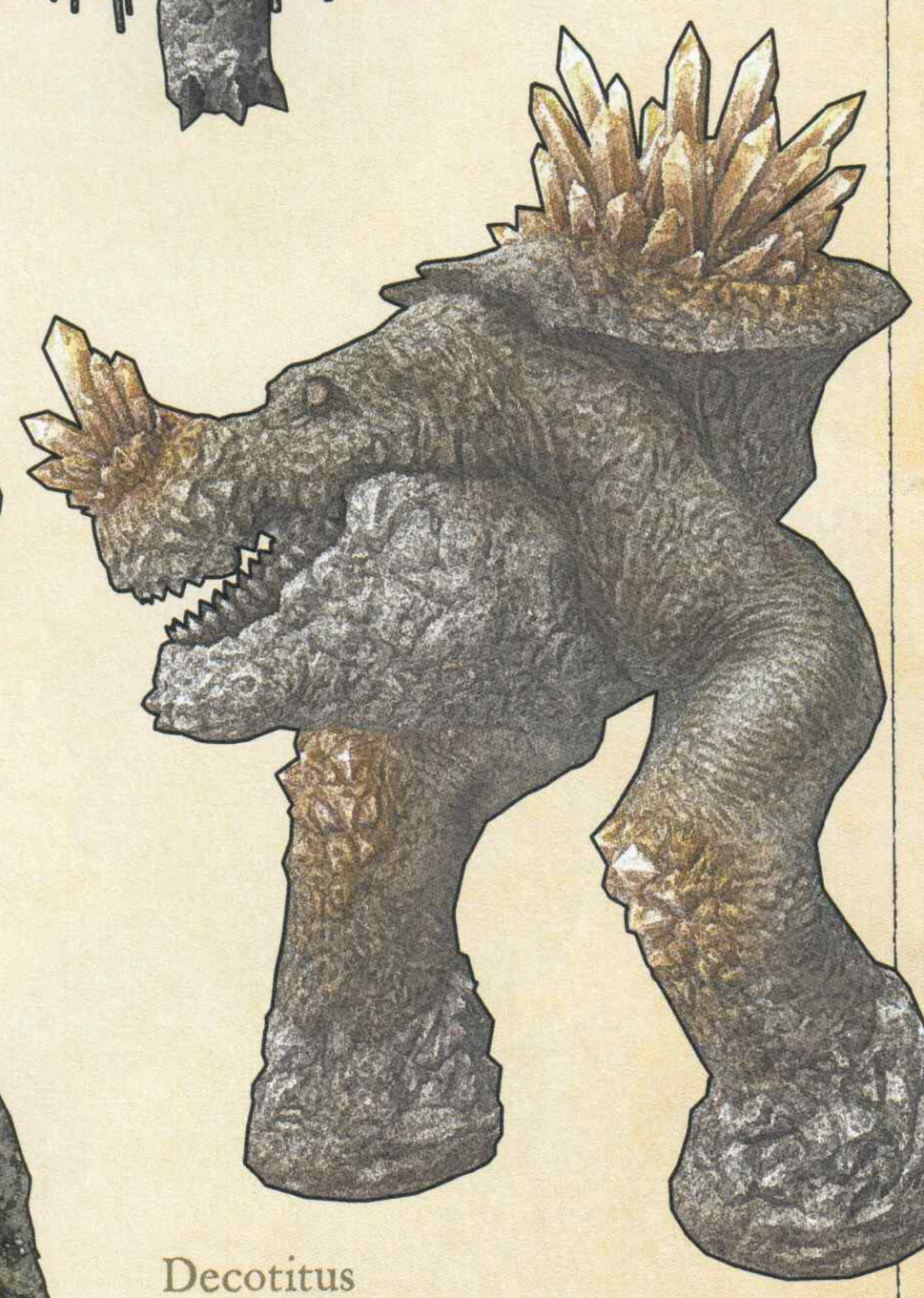
Perhaps due to their formation in an environment of extreme salinity, the shells of this cousin to the adamantoise are remarkably light. So light, in fact, that for centuries the Ala Mhigans would use them as fishing boats. However, after the Garlean invasion, the Empire deemed the practice barbarian and outlawed it throughout the occupied territory, and in a mere thirty summers, an ancient tradition was lost.



Matamata

The bulbous shell of the matamata provides the perfect camouflage for this scalekin that spends much of its life in the shadows of the Tail Mountains. Upon sensing danger, it will retreat under its rock-like carapace and become one with the cliffs and crags it calls home.



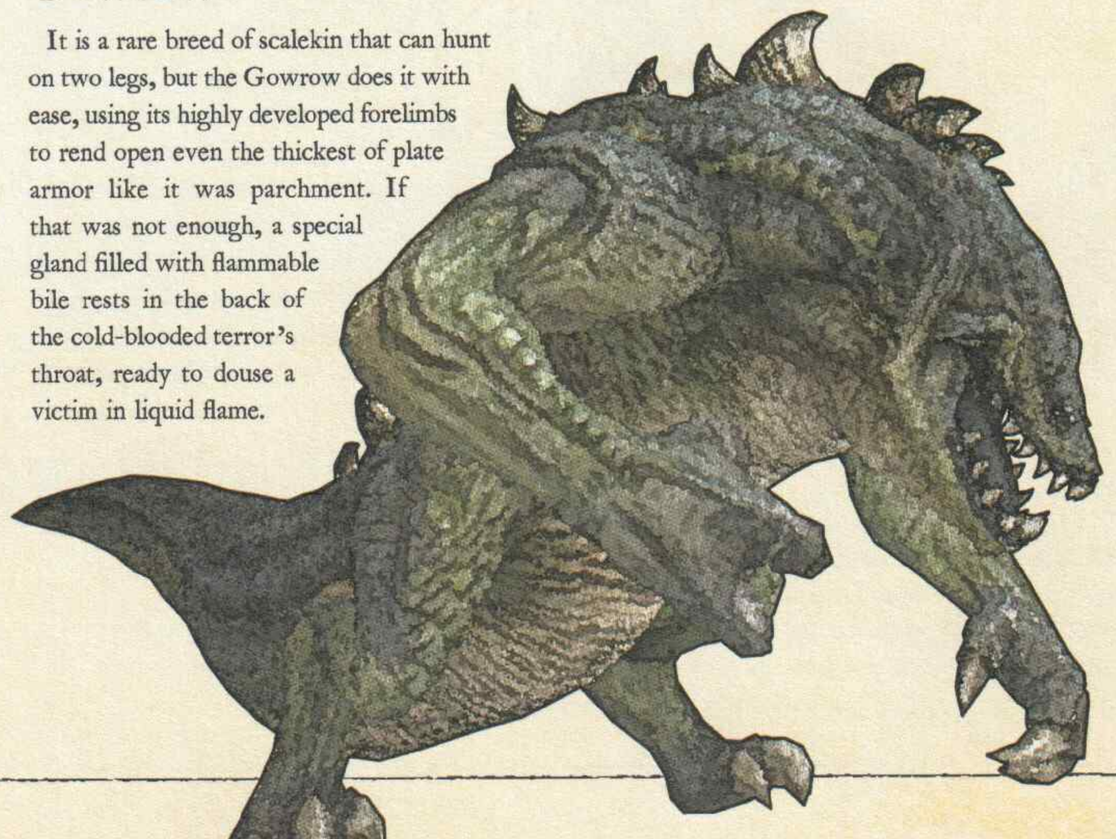


Primelephas

Due to its physical resemblance to an oliphant or a marid, one might think this scalekin somehow related to the pair; however this could not be farther from the truth. Scholars believe the similarities can be attributed to naught more than a rare case of convergent evolution, and instead claim the creature consanguineous with an adamantoise—its long nose, actually a hyperextended mouth.

Gowrow

It is a rare breed of scalekin that can hunt on two legs, but the Gowrow does it with ease, using its highly developed forelimbs to rend open even the thickest of plate armor like it was parchment. If that was not enough, a special gland filled with flammable bile rests in the back of the cold-blooded terror's throat, ready to douse a victim in liquid flame.



Decotitus

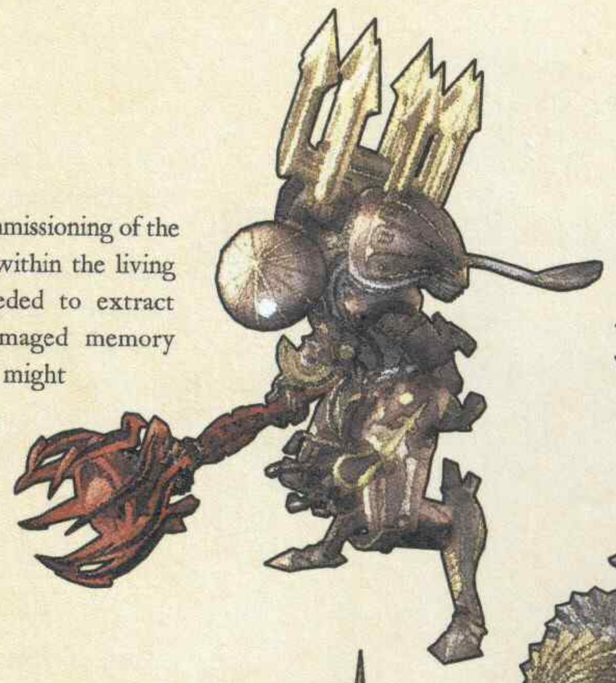
Until recently, the decotitus was classified as a soulkin, naturalists believing the crystalline formations about its body to be the source of its animation. This hypothesis has since been abandoned, scholars now understanding that the formations are a naturally occurring phenomenon, resulting from the creature's ingestion of massive quantities of soil and minerals affixed to the roots of the plants that make up its diet.

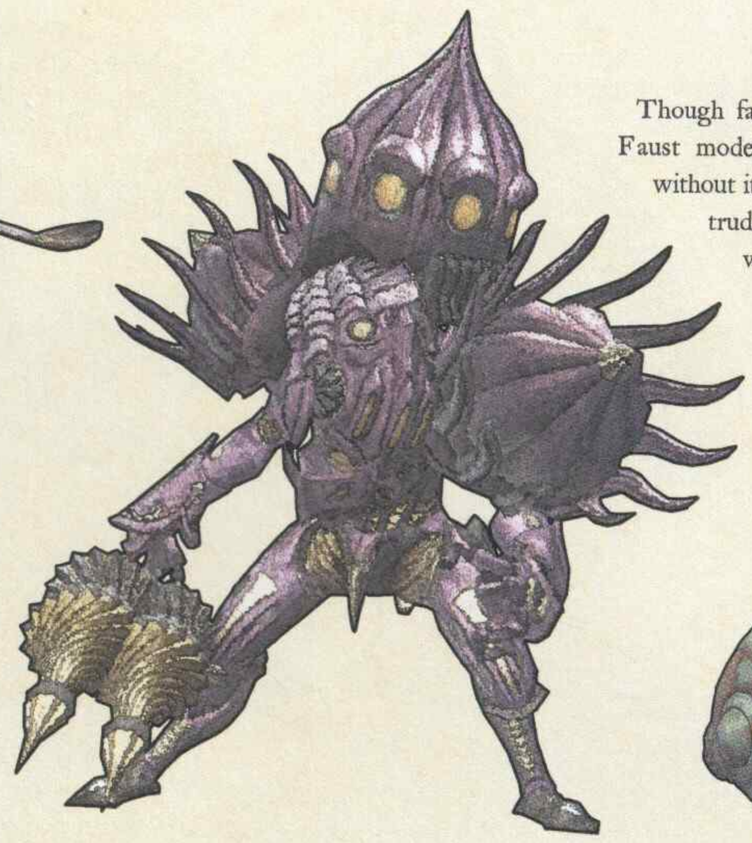
Forgekin

When the field of modern archaeology was still in its youth, many of the self-propelled mechanical creations of the ancients were thought to be animated using powerful magicks similar to those which breathe life into stone golems. It was not until recently with advancements in automaton construction that scholars have come to realize that the life force within man-made (or beast-made) forgekin is born of a complex array of smoke-belching engines and metallic gears.

Hummelfaust

Upon the untimely decommissioning of the panzer-type Faust, forces within the living fortress Alexander proceeded to extract the war machine's undamaged memory components so that they might be repurposed in a newer, more powerful model—the Hummelfaust.



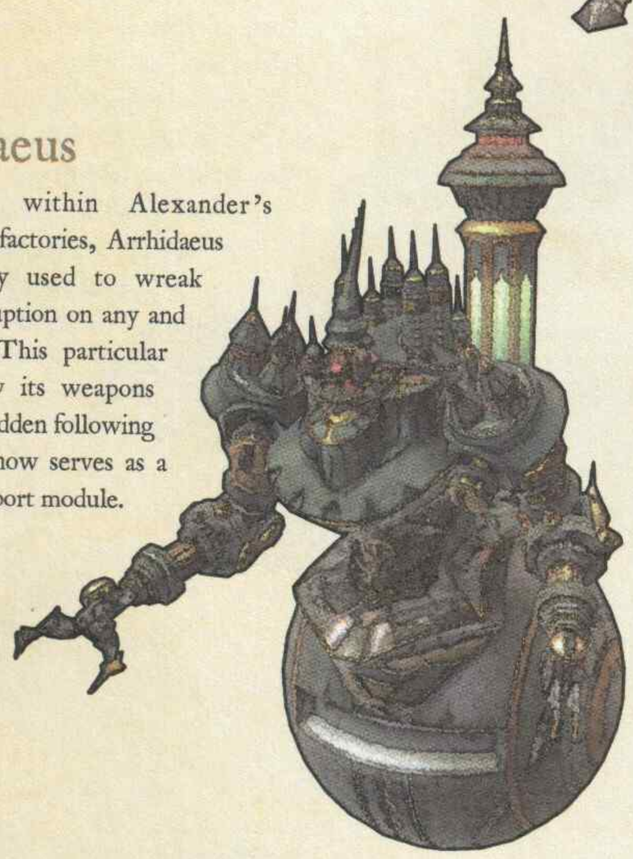


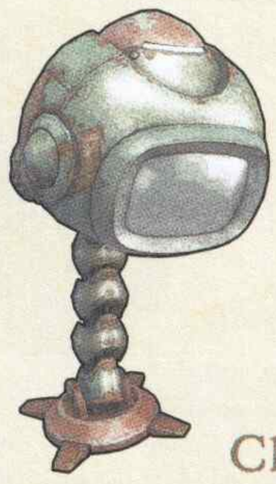
Faust Z

Though far more advanced than previous Faust models, the Hummelfaust was not without its limitations—limitations that intruders into Alexander's core systems were quick to exploit. In one final effort to further expand the war machine's capabilities without hampering its efficiency in battle, it was outfitted with double the weapons systems and defensive exoplating of its predecessor.

Arrhidaeus

Fabricated within Alexander's internal manufactories, Arrhidaeus was primarily used to wreak temporal disruption on any and all invaders. This particular construct saw its weapons systems overridden following capture, and now serves as a glorified transport module.



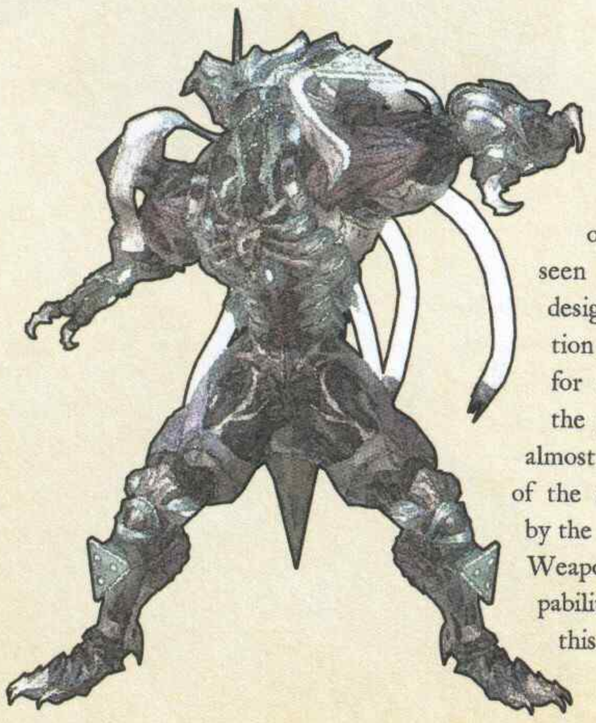


Level Checker

Information on this otherworldly creation tuned to the will of Omega is sorely lacking, and what little is known has gendered far more questions than it has provided answers. The ghostlike images displayed where one might expect a face; a single, spindly leg the only means of support for something even a grown Roegadyn cannot lift; and the capacity for flight, despite possessing neither wing nor jet, nor levitative bladder—in other words, its design and functionality defy all logic.

Motherbit

To defend the Ultima Weapon from those who might seek to wrest control of it from its masters, the Allagans implemented a series of deadly safeguards known as "bits." Rather than control these countless sentinels individually, a parent unit was developed—the Motherbit—that could send orders to its children simultaneously, allowing for immediate, coordinated assaults.



The Ultima Warrior

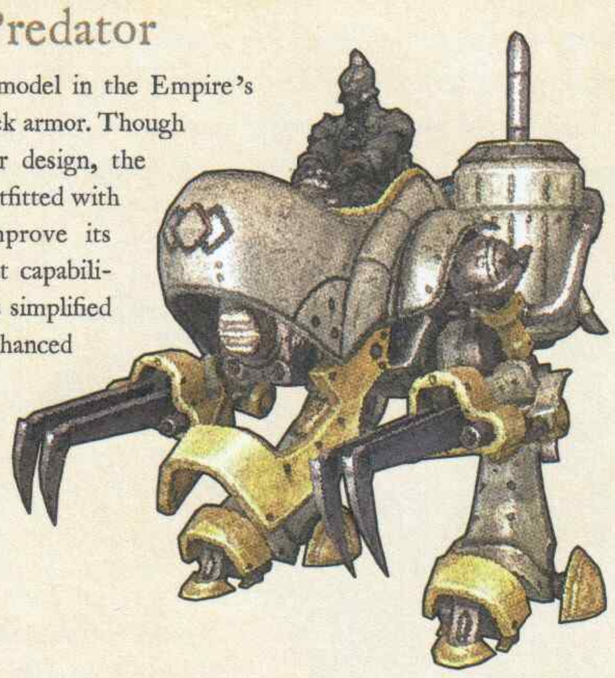
An early version of the Ultima Weapon, glimpses of the final creation can be seen in the Warrior's overall design. While bipedal locomotion was ultimately abandoned for a more stable alternative, the prototype's upper body is almost entirely identical to that of the metal monstrosity revived by the Garleans. Even the Ultima Weapon's aether-assimilating capabilities were near completion in this model, the Warrior already having absorbed portions of the Warring Triad.

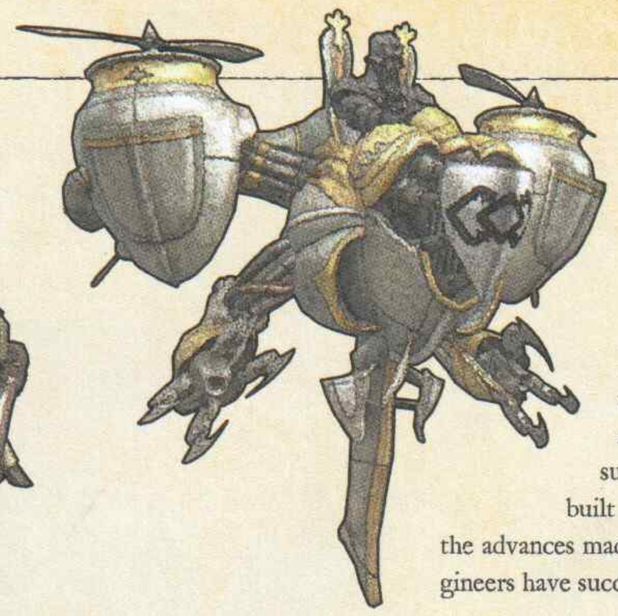
Proto Ultima

Along with the Ultima Warrior, Proto Ultima is one of several prototypes created by the Allagans in their long journey towards the completion of the Ultima Weapon. One of the most distinct differences between this model and the final is that at this point in their research, the Allagan scientists still had not discovered a means to protect a pilot from succumbing to the will of any primal absorbed by the machine, thus forcing them to employ a less-reliable artificial intelligence unit.

Magitek Predator

The most recent model in the Empire's line of piloted magitek armor. Though based on the reaper design, the predator has been outfitted with bladed arms to improve its close-quarter combat capabilities and also features simplified armor plating for enhanced mobility.



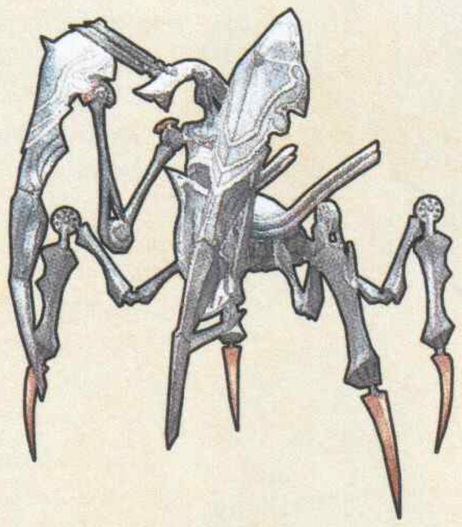


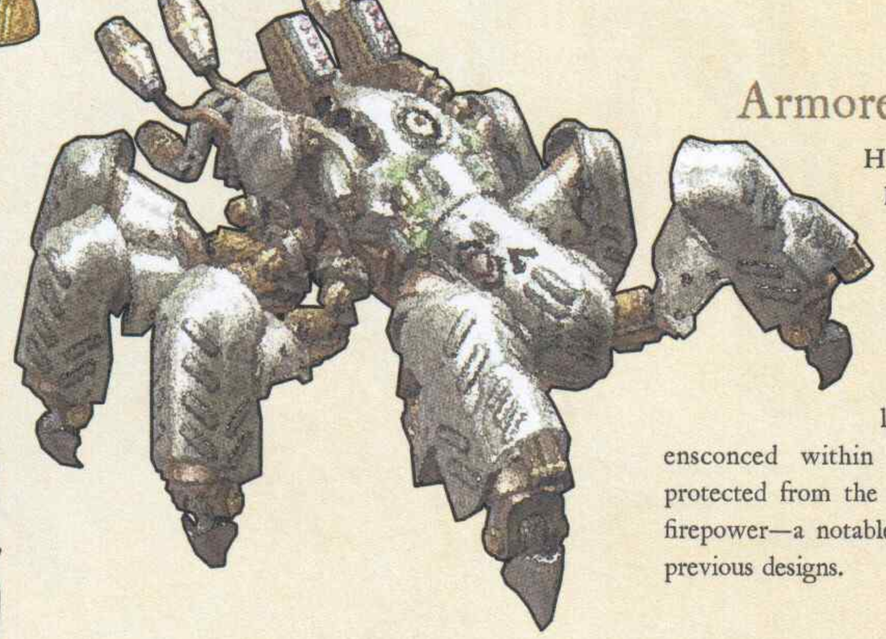
Magitek Sky Armor

An airborne unit constructed to accommodate a single pilot, sky armor is designed for maximum maneuverability. Previous flying models such as the juggernaut had, by necessity, been built on an enormous scale, but by implementing the advances made in the invention of the reaper, imperial engineers have succeeded in creating significantly smaller vessels.

Magitek Slasher

What the magitek slasher lacks in autonomous decision-making capabilities is offset by its compact design, which allows it far more maneuverability than the larger warmachina more prevalent in the Empire's ranks. As such, the scythe-limbed slashers are oft used in tight quarters such as fortresses or alleyways where melee combat is the preferred method of assault.



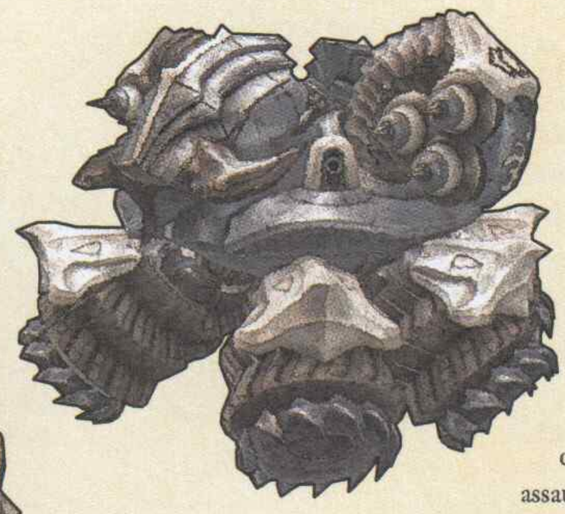


Armored Weapon

Heavily armored and heavily armed, this magitek weapon maintains stability by shifting weight over its multiple mechanical legs. The pilot sits ensconced within a sealed cockpit, protected from the weapon's explosive firepower—a notable improvement over previous designs.

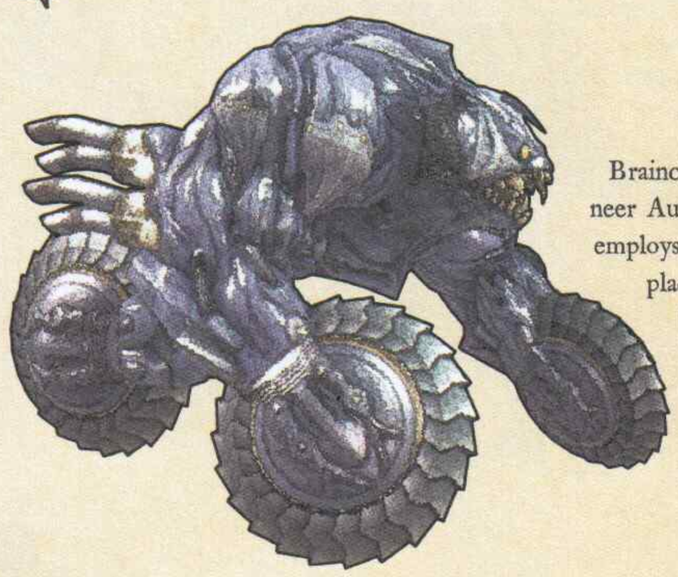
Magitek Rearguard

A variation on the magitek vanguard, the rearguard has been customized for duty behind a legion's main lines of attack. These customizations include increased heavy plating and long-range weaponry—luxuries that can be afforded since mobility is often not an issue where these machina are stationed.



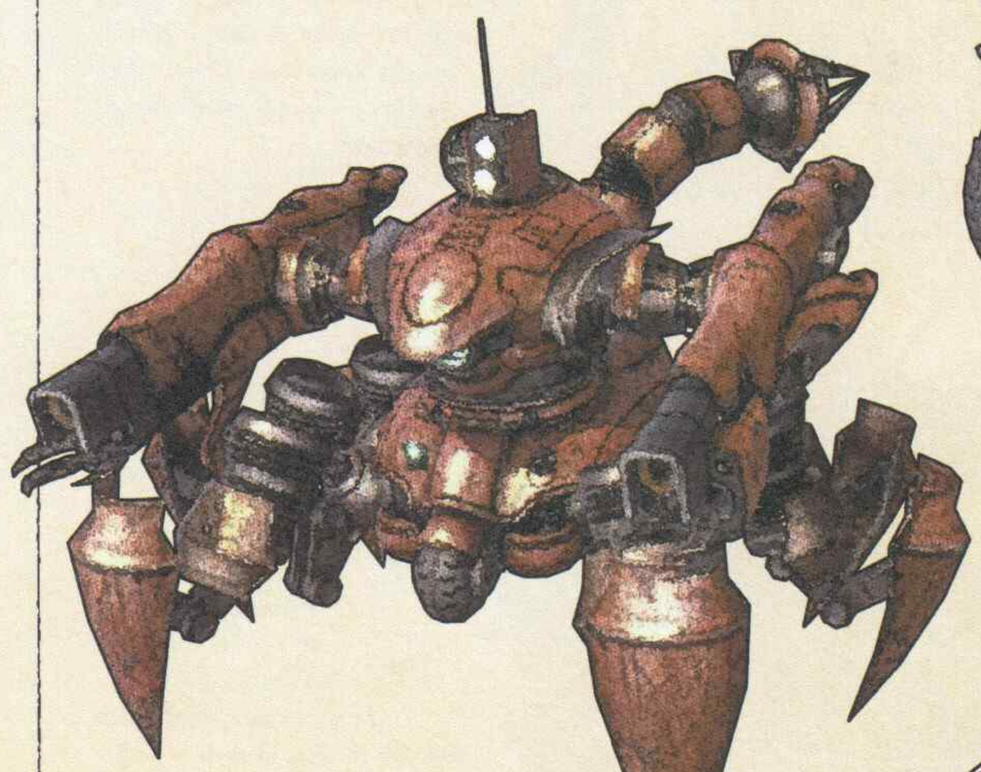
Magitek Hexadrone

Unlike most of the Empire's warmachina, the hexadrone does not employ limbs for locomotion, but rather a unique set of six independent wheel mounts which can each rotate a full 360 degrees. This not only allows for precision maneuverability, but provides the capacity for highly efficient spinning assaults that can clear a battlefield in a matter of moments.



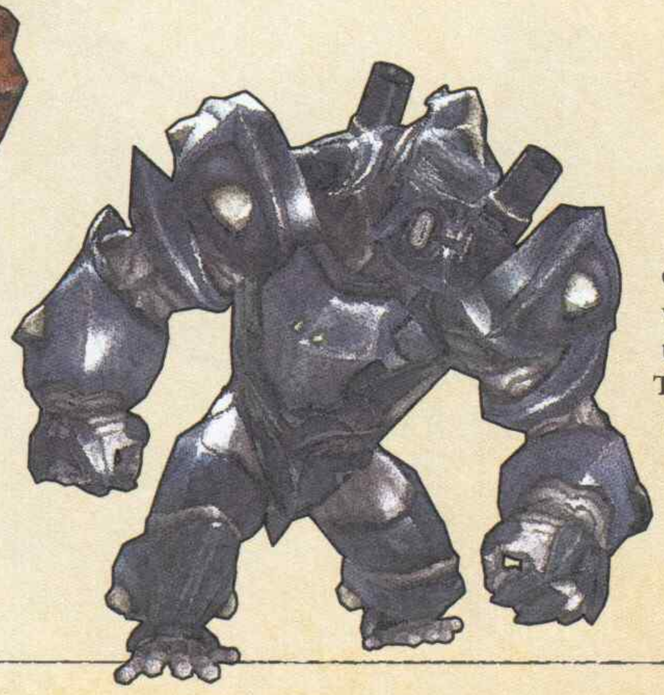
Magna Roader

Brainchild of the mad magitek bioengineer Aulus mal Asina, the magna roader employs a network of synthetic fibers in place of metal framework to form a body unlike any other seen on a warmachina. These "muscles" allow for increased maneuverability and strength, while creating an outward appearance that is eerily lifelike.



Magitek Scorpion

Still in the prototype phase, scores of these battle-ready arachnids were sent to the occupied territory of Ala Mhigo for live testing. Its prominent features include six claws hooked for ease of travel amongst the rocky Gyr Abanian terrain, and a quick-rotating turret that can spit instant death in any direction.



Magitek Avenger

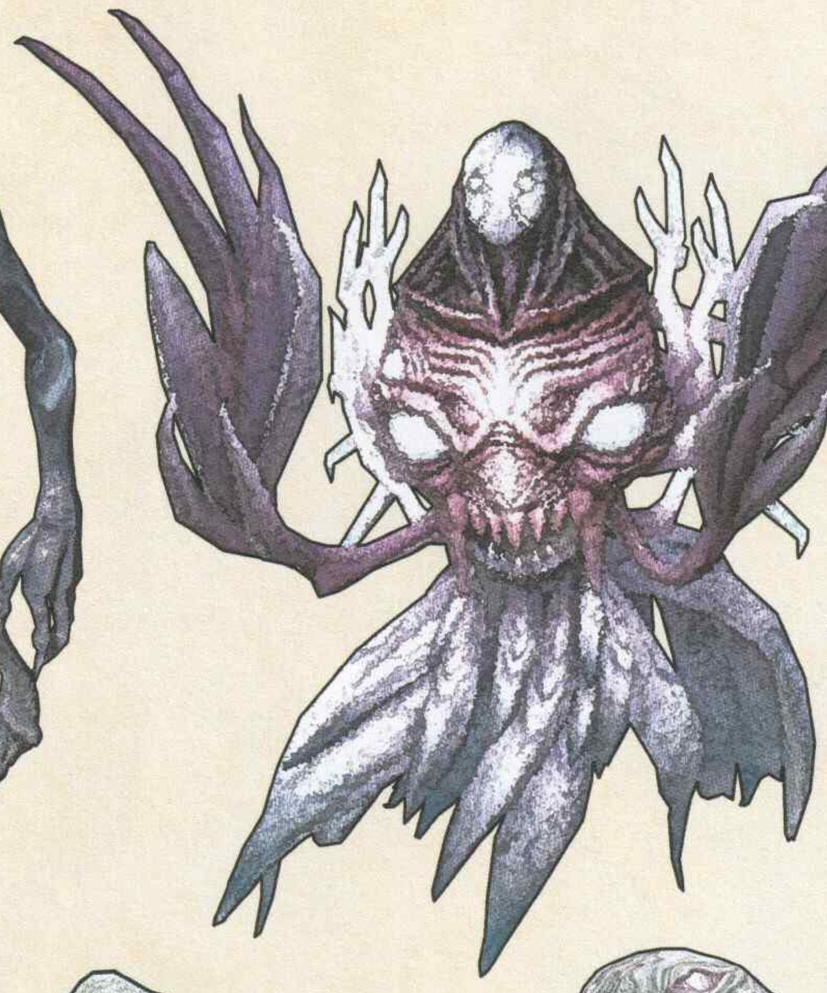
Ever seeking to improve upon earlier models, Garlean engineers will sometimes look to the most unexpected of places for inspiration. The vanguard-type avenger is one such example, its design based on the general anatomy of none other than a mountain-dwelling sasquatch.

Ashkin

Ashkin represent beings which, at one time, were full to bursting with vigor, but, for some reason (most commonly death), have that life energy drained of them leaving naught but a shell—a shell that is then reanimated by some outside means, denying the creature's thoroughgoing return, be it either physical or spiritual, to the Lifestream.

Specter

Some cultures believe that when the dead are not provided proper burials, their souls remain trapped in the corporeal realm. Attuned to the scent of mortality, these tormented spirits seek out their neglected remains and "possess" them in much the same manner voidsent inhabit vessels to facilitate their entry into our plane, leading some scholars to draw the conclusion there may be some connection between the void and the afterlife.



Haunt

Similar to banshees in that they wield protoplasmic appendages to probe the inner recesses of their victims' minds in a futile search for answers to their being, haunts have stronger ties still to the corporeal realm, their material forms lending to images of tormented children or decrepit elders. There are Far Eastern seers who go as far as to claim haunts are the spawn of great evil...yet little evidence has been provided to support this theory.

Zangbeto

There is much to suggest that the zangbeto is naught more than another angry spirit unable to make the journey to the afterlife, and so instead takes possession of some worldly object—in this case, hair. A notable group of Sharlayan scholars, however, disagrees with this notion, their own studies leading them to the conclusion that such a creature cannot be realized by natural means, and must have been conceived with the darkest of necromantic magicks.

Banshee

Whereas specters seem to be drawn to death, banshees exhibit an atypical attachment to life, despite their corporal forms already having returned to the aether. Unable to pass peacefully into the great beyond, these material spirits remain bound to the realm of the living. Unable to grasp why it was their time to die, they attack the minds of others, seeking answers that they can never find.

Giant Corse

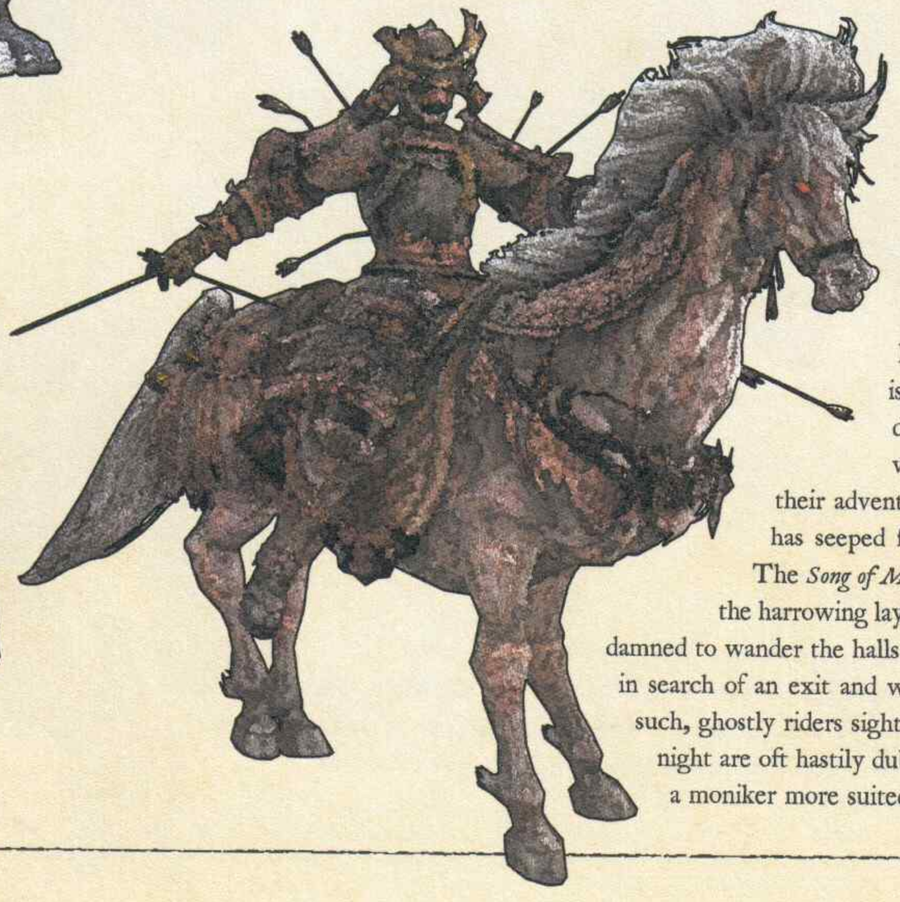
An affront to the gods, this unholy creation—hastily stitched together using the dismembered limbs of noble giants fallen in battle—cannot feel pain, nor remorse, making it even more deadly than it was when alive.

Bicephalic Corse

Giants have never been known for their intelligence, and an untimely death will do little to improve the situation. To circumvent this, certain ambitious dabblers in the necromantic arts have taken to fastening a second head to their undead creations with hopes that the combined intellect is enough to bring some semblance of order over the body's functions. More often than not, it simply results in foul disposition.

Geshunpest

It is said this powerful evil rides the evening brume, seeking to take its victims unawares. Those rare few who have laid eyes on a geshunpest and survived tell of a towering horror that gazes down with not one, but two pairs of eyes—one atop its head, and one upon its belly, the latter thought to be a reflection of one's deepest fears.

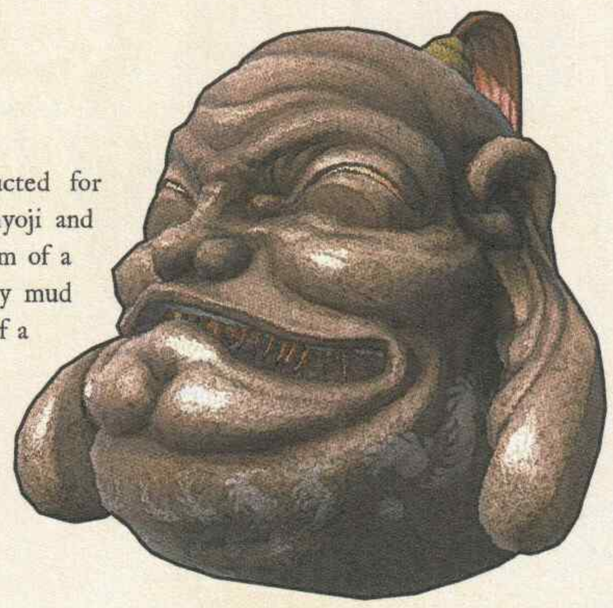


Mifune

Far Eastern literature is rife with stories of undead heroes and villains who refuse to abandon their adventures, even after all life has seeped from their cold bodies. The *Song of Mifune* is one such tale—the harrowing lay of a horseback warrior damned to wander the halls of an endless labyrinth in search of an exit and with it his salvation. As such, ghostly riders sighted under the shroud of night are oft hastily dubbed mifune for lack of a moniker more suited.

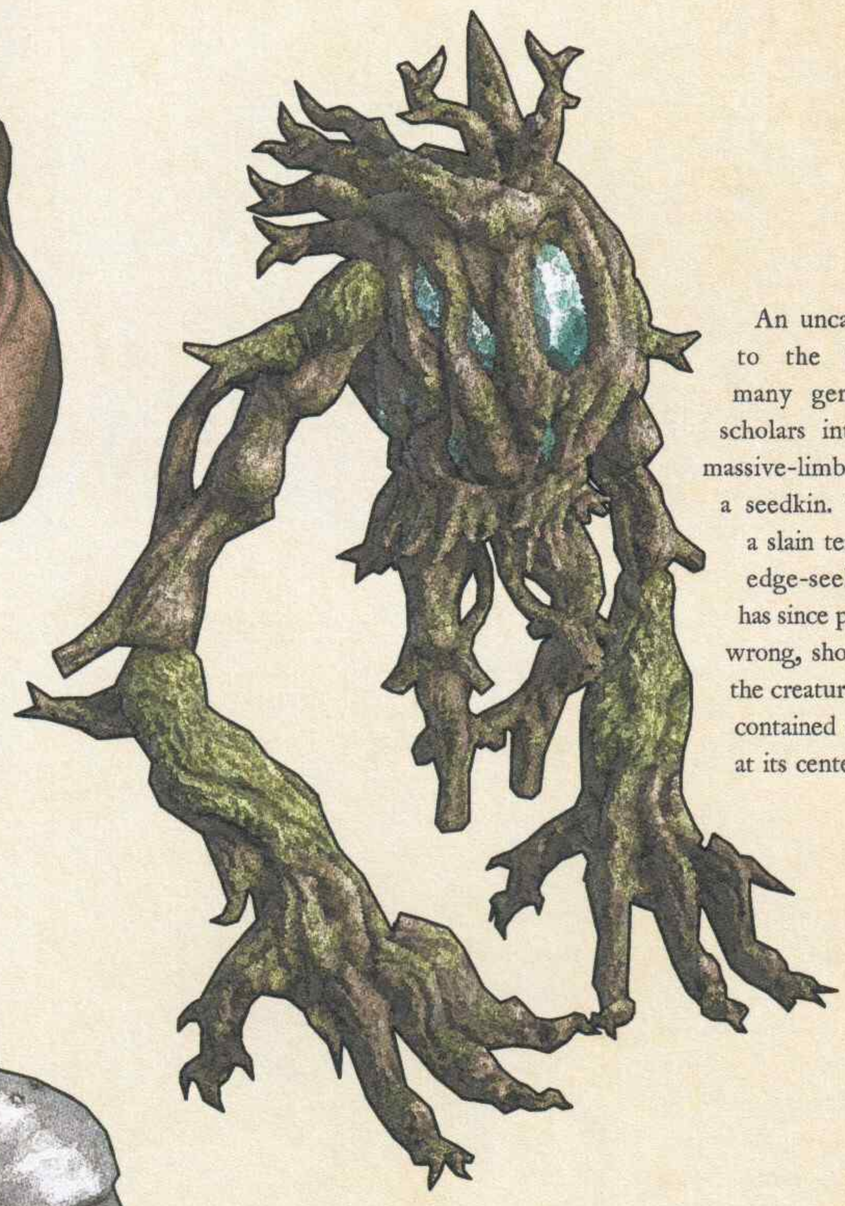
Soulkin

Soulkin are inorganic beings that have been granted temporary life via outside magicks or a magicked medium. This ensorcellment allows for the pooling of aether within the creature—aether which enables ambulation, simple cognitive reasoning, and in extreme cases, limited linguistic capacity. Recent findings may also suggest the birth of a soulkin may, on rare occasion, occur naturally—the life-giving aether intended for one creature mistakenly entrusted to an inanimate object by the fickle mistress that is nature.



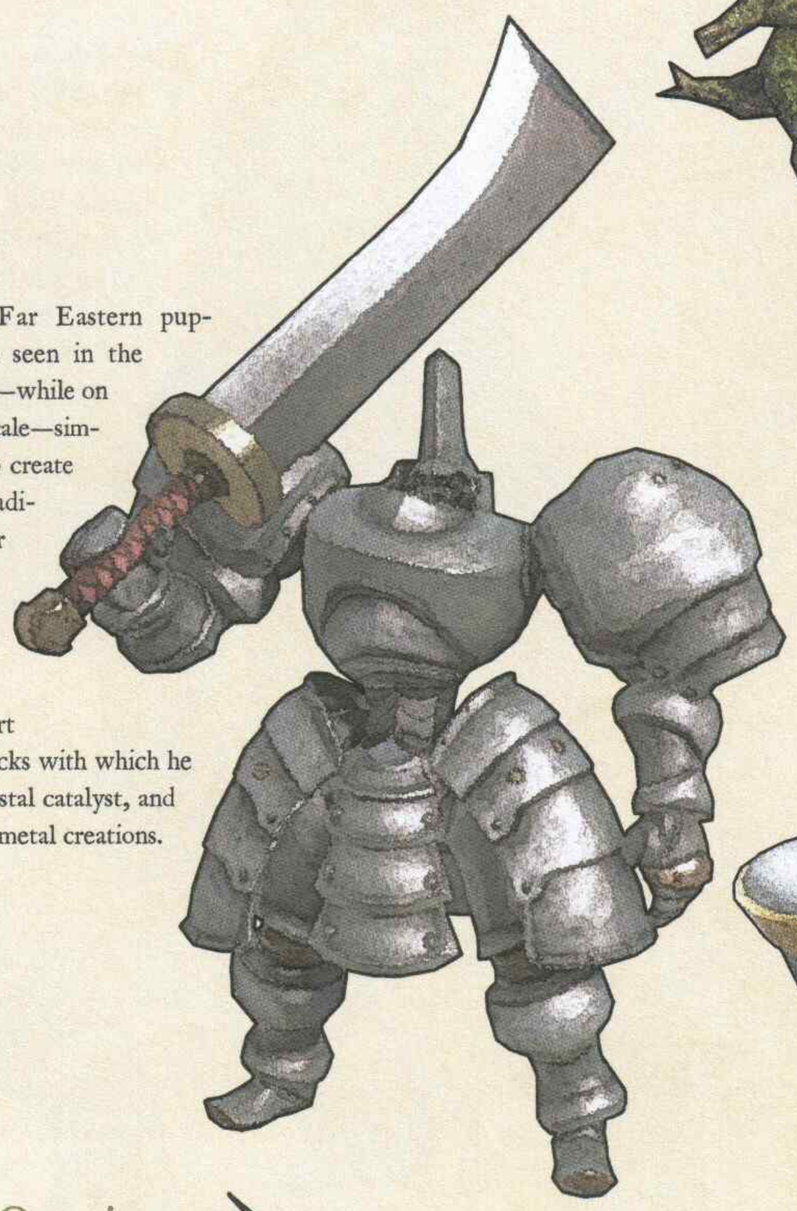
Koja

A golem mainly constructed for the purpose of serving onmyoji and geomancers, the bulbous form of a koja is fashioned from sticky mud and imbued with the spirit of a shikigami. The features common to all koja are believed to be modeled after the original creator—a eunuch from ancient times—but no portrait has ever been found to substantiate this claim.



Tenaga

An uncanny resemblance to the leshy had, for many generations, fooled scholars into believing this massive-limbed creature was a seedkin. The donation of a slain tenaga by a knowledge-seeking adventurer has since proven the scholars wrong, showing instead that the creature's will is, in fact, contained within the crystal at its center.

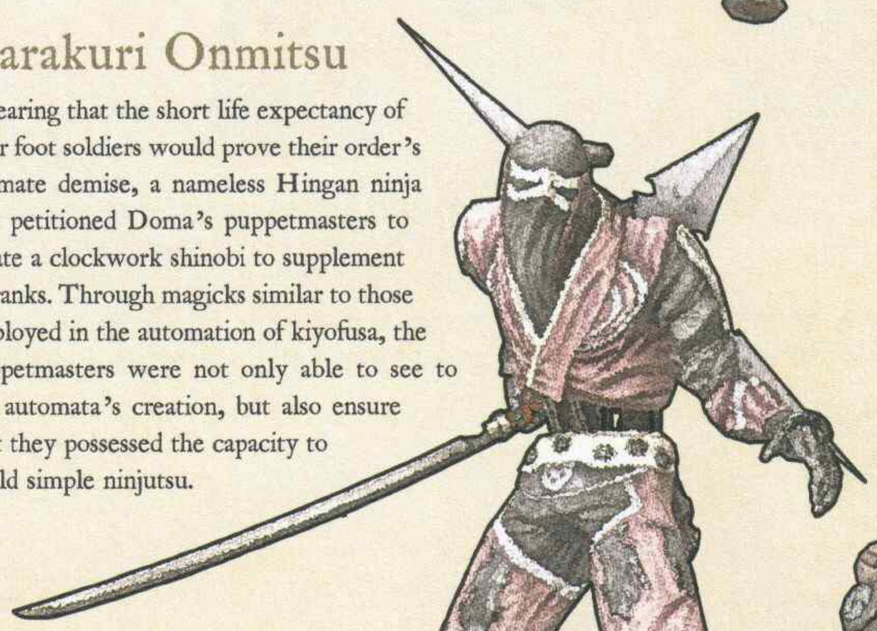


Kiyofusa

The origins of Far Eastern puppet-making can be seen in the kiyofusa, its designs—while on a somewhat larger scale—similar to those used to create marionettes for traditional plays. Their deployment into battle did not occur until the master goldsmith Kiyofusa Twinheart discovered the magicks with which he might enchant a crystal catalyst, and breathe life into his metal creations.

Sai Taisui

This mighty, yet obedient slave is believed to have been created in much the same manner as a koja: by animating mud with ancient geomantic magicks. A sai taisui's singularity lies in the type of mud used in its creation—soil taken from those rare locations where currents of earth, wind, and water interconnect, providing a focus for powers ordinarily unobtainable.

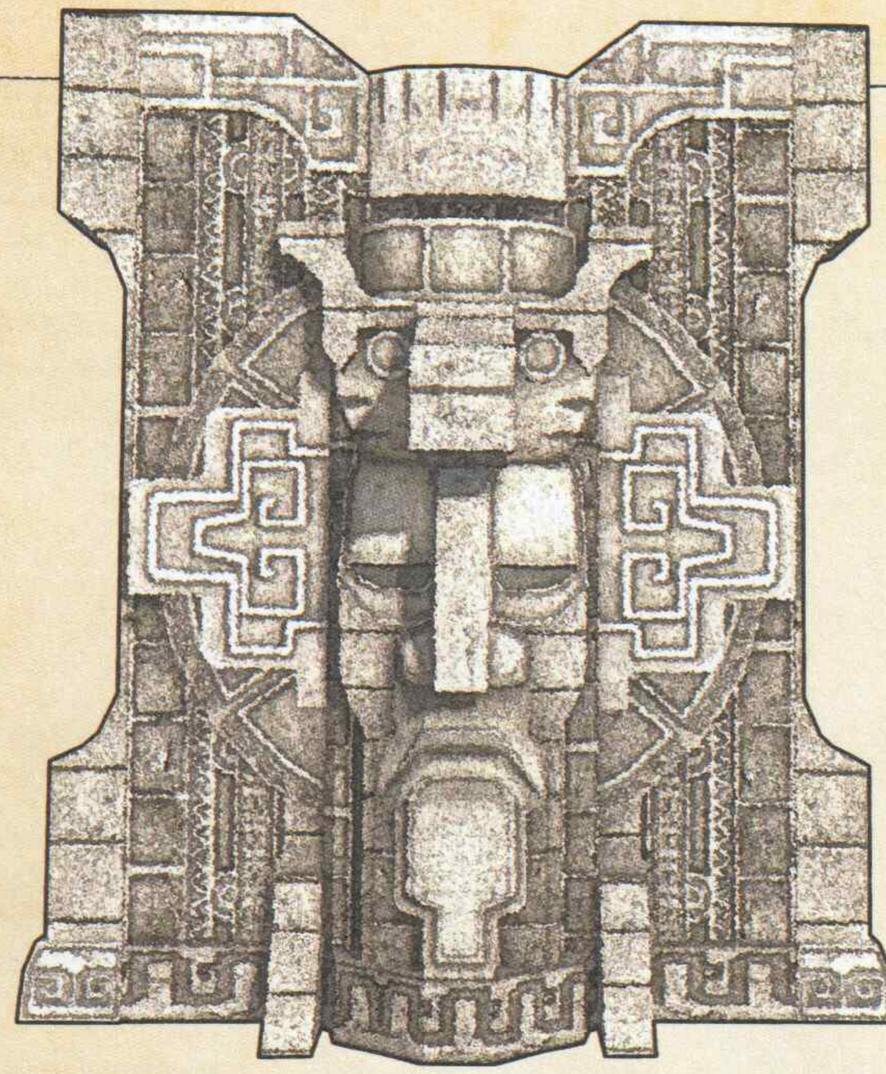


Karakuri Onmitsu

Fearing that the short life expectancy of their foot soldiers would prove their order's ultimate demise, a nameless Hingan ninja sect petitioned Doma's puppetmasters to create a clockwork shinobi to supplement its ranks. Through magicks similar to those employed in the automation of kiyofusa, the puppetmasters were not only able to see to the automata's creation, but also ensure that they possessed the capacity to wield simple ninjutsu.

Karakuri Hanya

Fitted with a mask of the hanya—a symbol of extreme envy and malice—this automaton is a marriage of Doman ingenuity and Hingan design. It creators, somehow uncertain that a high-powered crossbow welded to one arm and a ludicrously large mace to the other would provide the golem with sufficient means of punishing its victims, also installed variations with a self-destruct mechanism capable of laying waste to nearby attackers.



Khun Chuluu

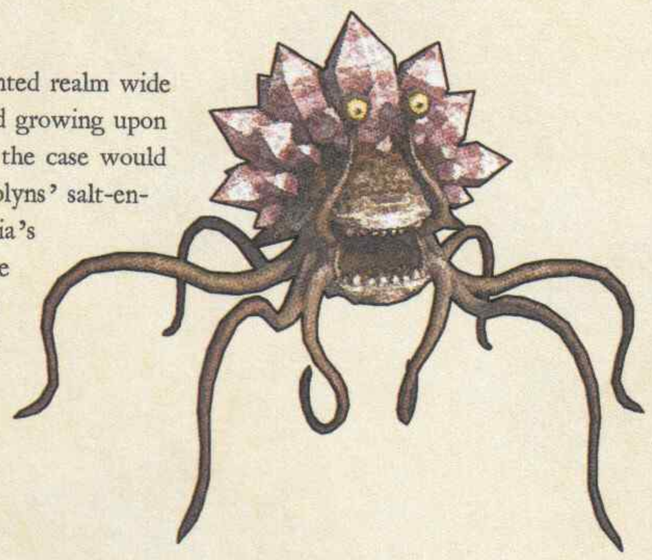
Their name meaning "man of stone" in several ancient Xaela dialects, these earthen guardians of the Azim Steppe are animated using magicks known only to a handful of tribal shamans. The incantations, however, are so potent that they grant the khun chuluu with ability to cast spells normally reserved for the most skilled mages.

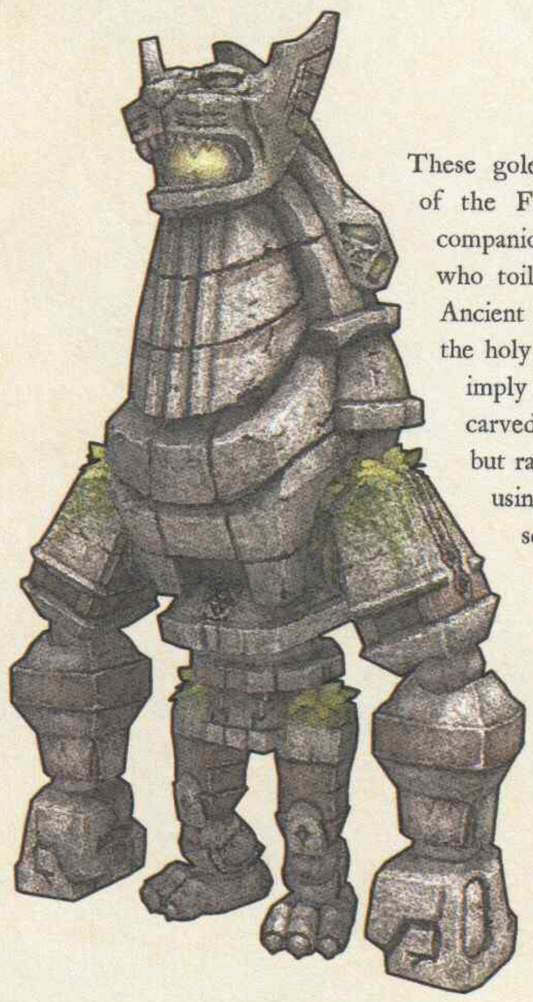
Khun Shavar

By empowering vessels of wood and leather instead of those carved from raw stone, steppe shamans have created subjects that are more vulnerable to the sword. Yet what is lost in protection is gained twofold through increased agility and dexterity, making these loyal automata as deadly, if not more so, than the khun chuluu.

Soblyn

Both coblyns and doblyns are hunted realm wide for the valuable ore and gems found growing upon their backs. One would think that the case would be no different for soblyns—the coblyns' salt-encrusted cousins native to Gyr Abania's Lochs region. Unfortunately, the saline crystals harvested from a soblyn are unbearably bitter, making them a hard sell at market. This ultimately has led to a population explosion that threatens the livelihoods of countless salters who work the shores of Loch Seld.



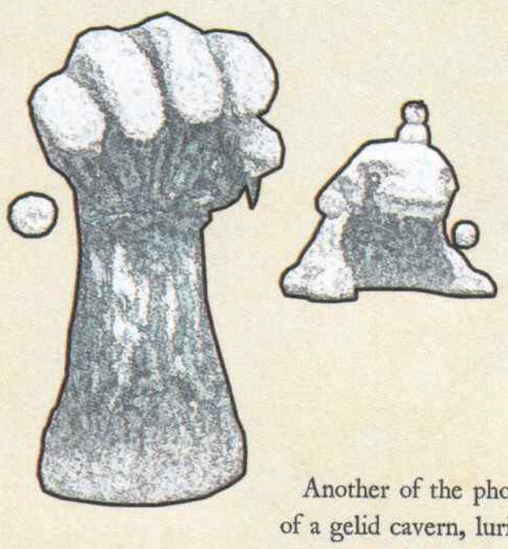


Singha

These golems inhabit the Temple of the Fist, serving as training companions to the myriad monks who toil within the sacred halls. Ancient tomes dating to the era of the holy stronghold's construction imply that the singha were not carved by conventional means, but rather pummeled into shape using naught but the fists of a score artisan acolytes.

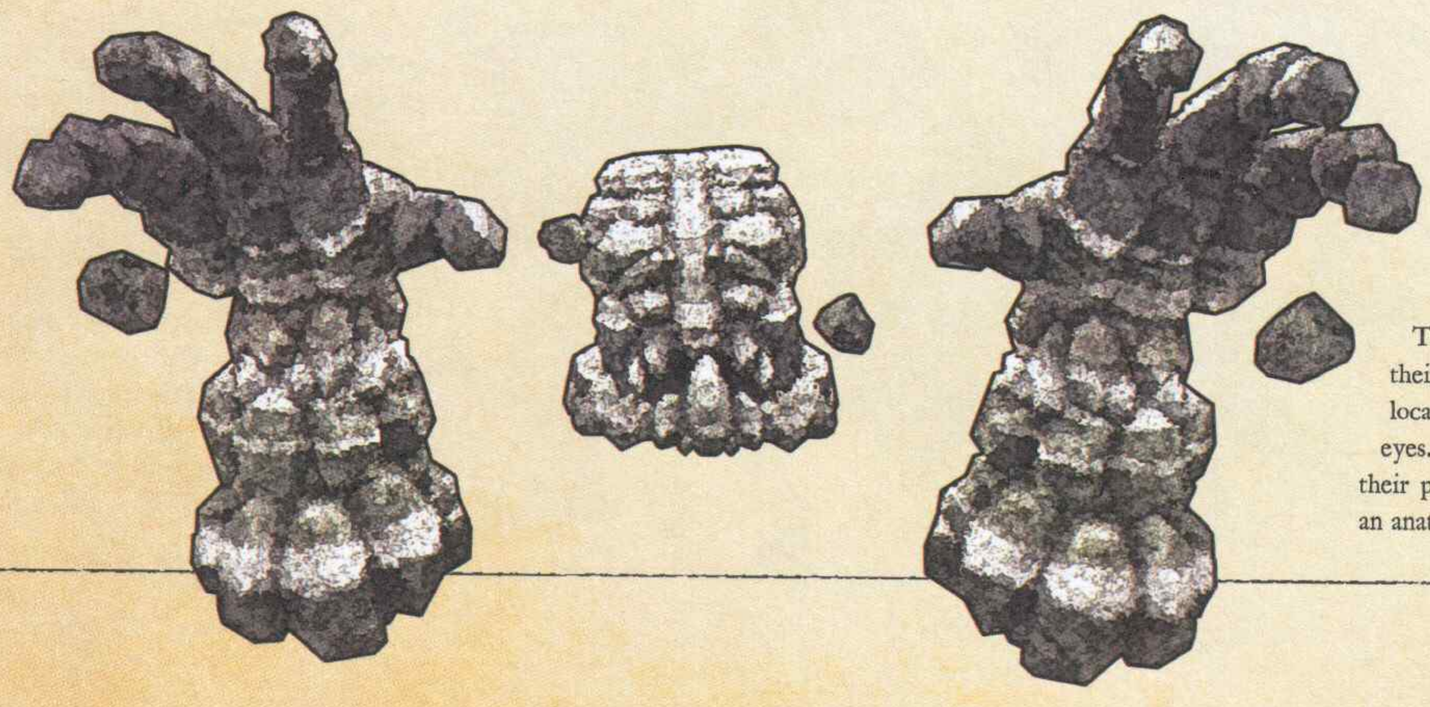
Phoebad

Phoebads are a type of golem that occur naturally in areas rich in salt crystals, such as Loch Seld and other similar bodies of water. In folklore, phoebads are said to have once been people who defied the revelations of Rhalgr, and were transformed as punishment for their disobedience.



Igloo

Another of the phoebad's relatives, the igloo takes on the form of a gelid cavern, luring in beasts of the northern wastes with the promise of sanctuary from the biting cold. Yet once an animal has crawled within, the soulkin will close its doors, encasing its victim in ice and draining it of its very aether. Fortunately, this silent predator can only survive in areas of extreme ice aspect.



Huwasi

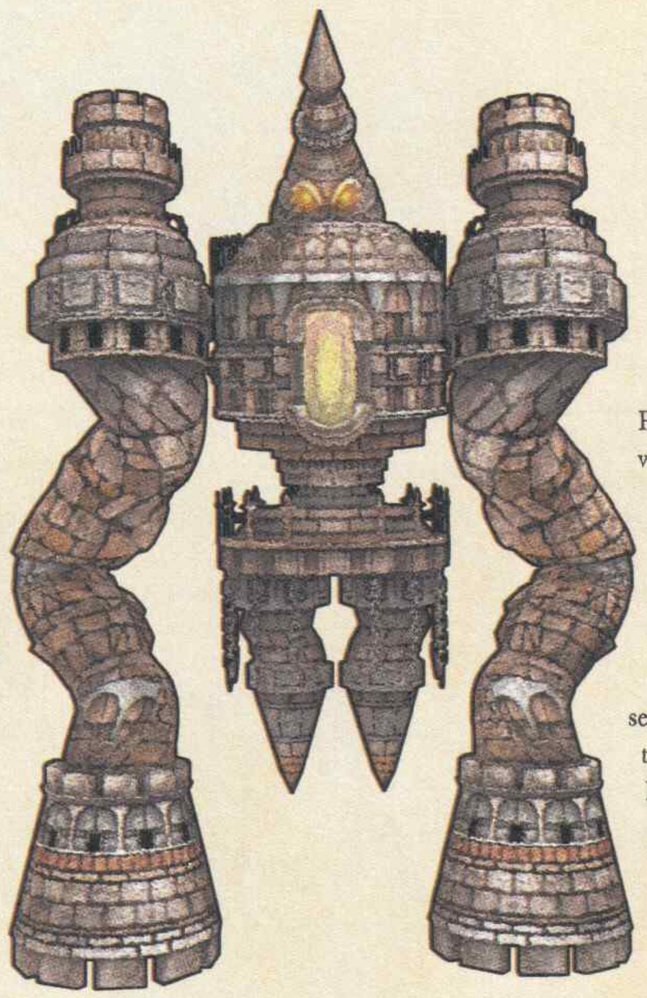
The huwasi share much in common with their close cousins, the phoebads—including the location of their controlling cores behind their eyes. What sets the huwasi apart, however, is their prodigious strength, afforded the golems by an anatomy of solid stone.

Wanyudo & Katasharin

A mammet-type construction prevalent in the Far East. The cartwheels, adorned with the unsettling faces of a man and woman, are said to resemble mythical apparitions known for stealing the souls of any who look upon them—a design deliberately intended to frighten away cowardly interlopers.

Barmuu

Discovered deep within the ruins of a city buried for centuries beneath the kingdom of Dalmasca, this unique golem is believed to have once served as a guardian. Corruption caused by energies emitted from auracite, however, has seen the barmuu forget their original purpose, rendering them mindless vessels who now know only indiscriminate slaughter.

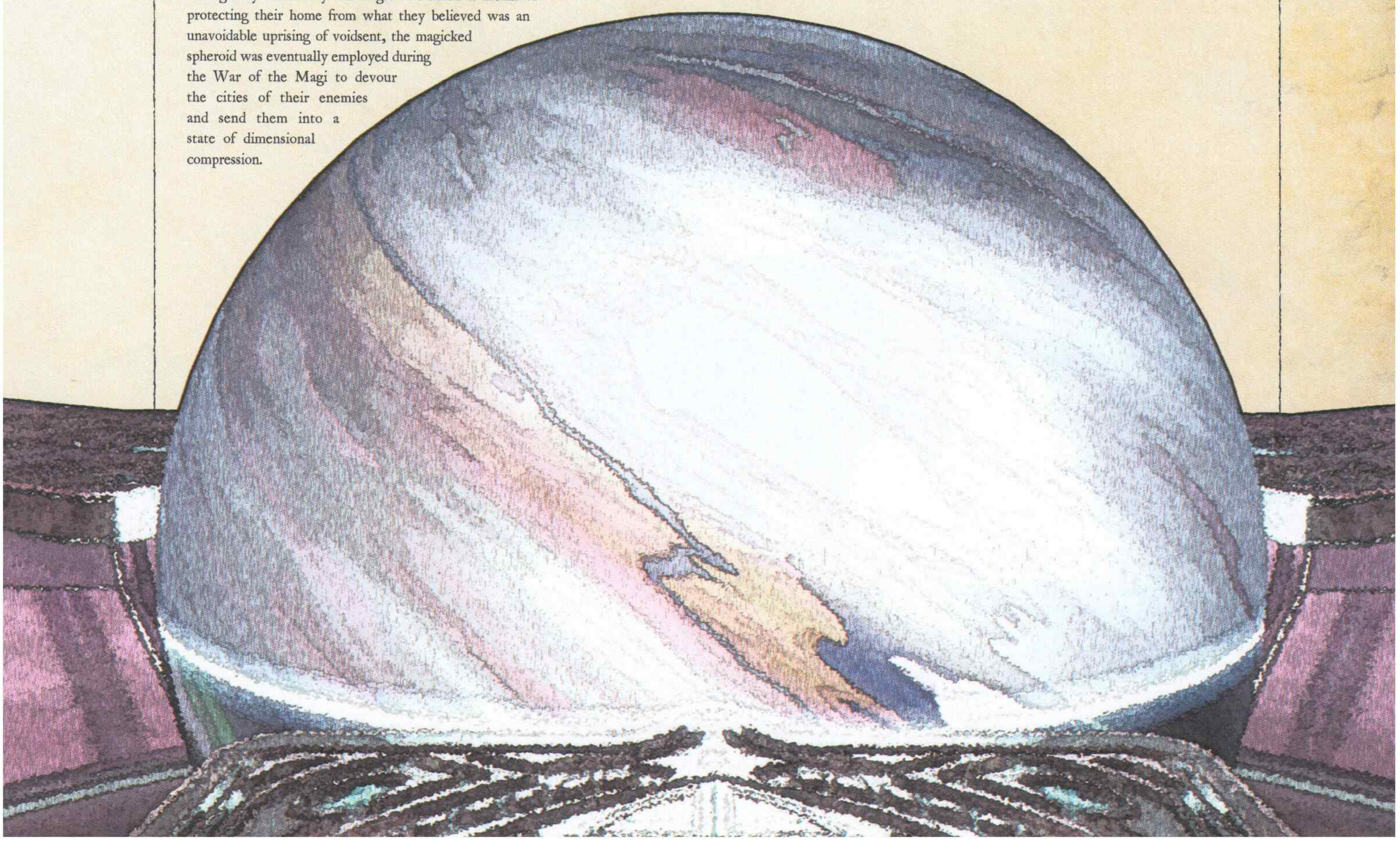


Iron Golem

For countless dark winters have the iron golems of Dalmasca's ancient underworld kept their forges hot, ever ready for their long-silent masters' call to service. Though unable to act of their own volition, they have been ordered to maintain their upkeep, and do so by wandering the ruins in search of materials with which they might reinforce their armor.

Ozma

Originally created by the mages of Mhach as means of protecting their home from what they believed was an unavoidable uprising of voidsent, the magicked spheroid was eventually employed during the War of the Magi to devour the cities of their enemies and send them into a state of dimensional compression.



VOIDSENT

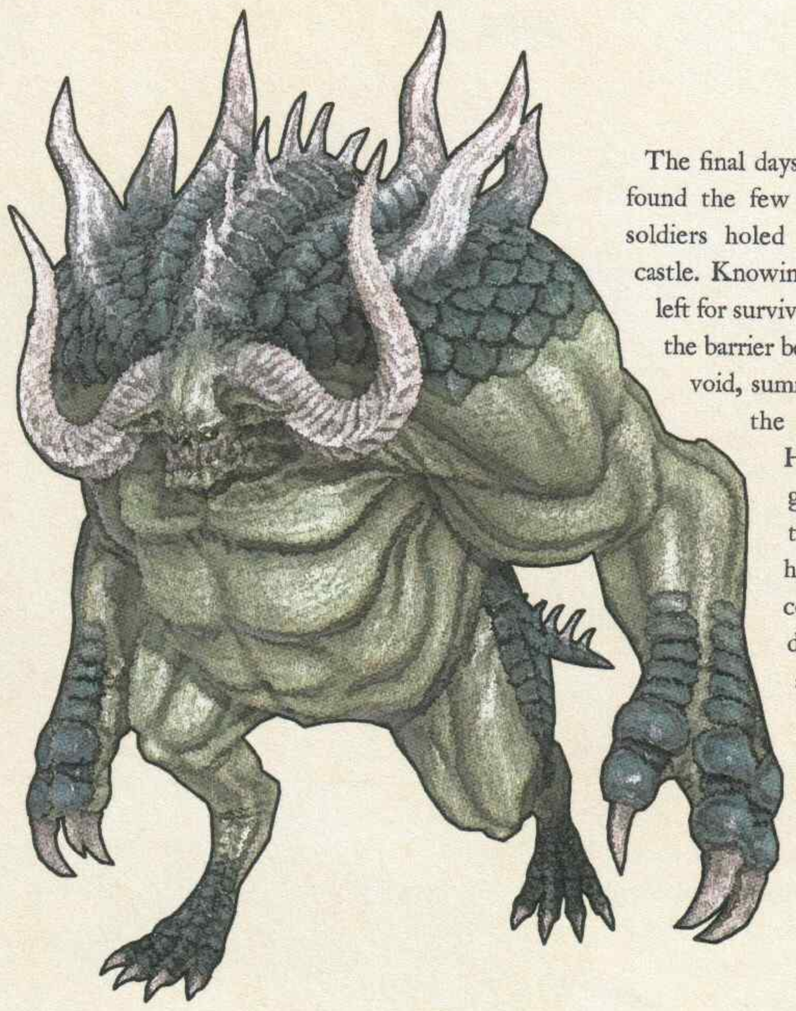
For generations, scholars have struggled to make sense of the void, its secrets both literally and figuratively veiled in shadow. Revelations that the plane may, in fact, be a reflection of our own world stripped of its aether by a flood of Darkness have helped shed new light on the true nature of the benighted realm and its denizens so eager to abandon their home for ours—discoveries made possible by the continued efforts of the Warrior of Light and his loyal companions.

Demon of the Tome

On the sixth rung of the voidsent hierarchy will one find this highly intelligent demon that oddly prefers the possession of books and tomes over that of a more common vessel. Its realm of influence, however, is by no means limited to the confines of its parchment prison, as it possesses the uncanny ability to project accumulated aether into a wholly corporeal, albeit temporary, form.

Archaeodemon

There is no one proper way to summon a voidsent, but depending on the method employed, the point of contact within the dark realm will vary. Some rites of summoning once popular in eras past have since fallen out of fashion due to lack of efficiency or severity of price exacted. As such, the beings that answered these particular calls are now rarely seen on this plane—the archaeodemons a victim of this trend.



Muud Suud

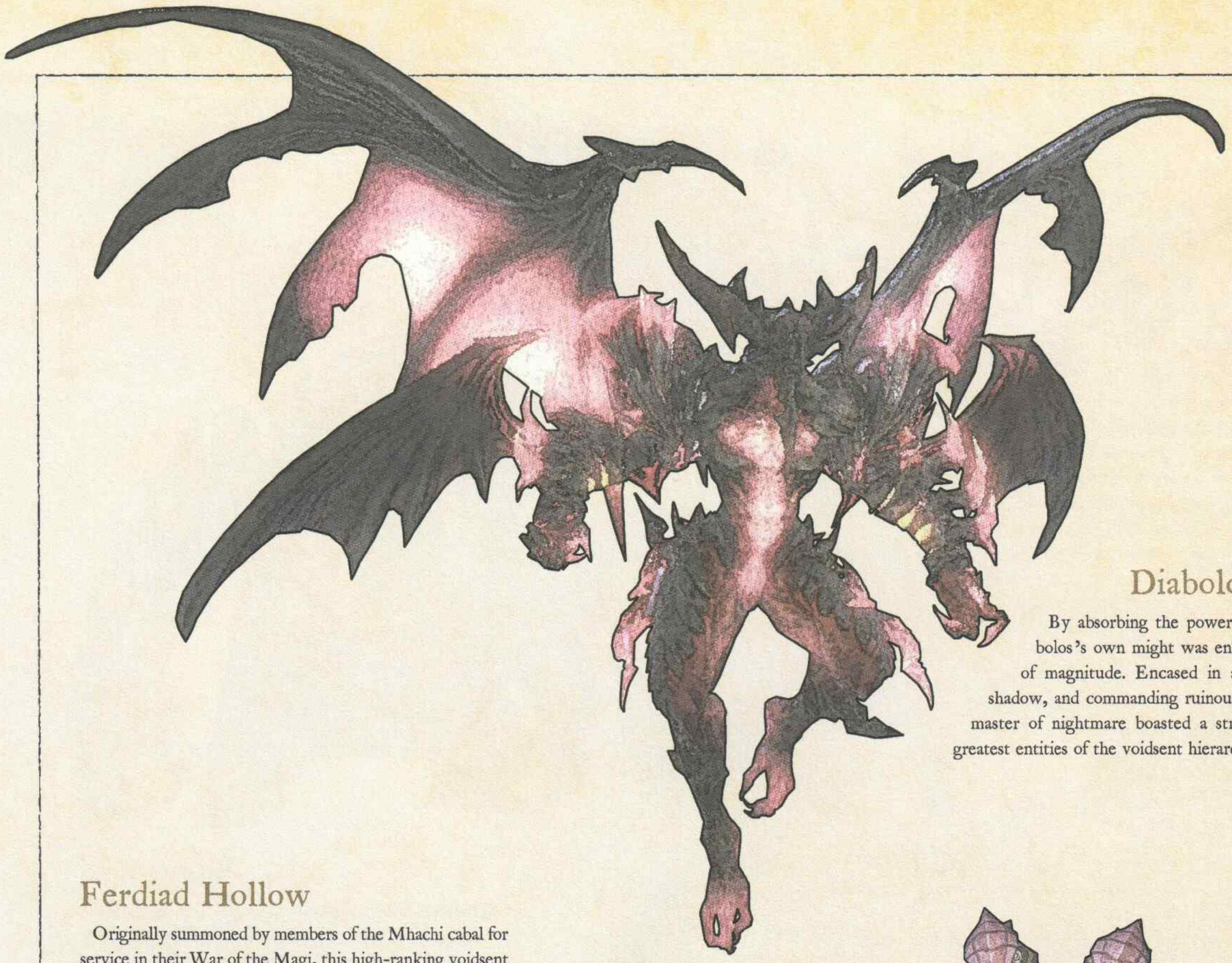
The final days of the Garlean invasion found the few remaining Ala Mhigan soldiers holed up in their crumbling castle. Knowing they had little choice left for survival, court mages rent open the barrier between this realm and the void, summoning beings to inhabit the bodies of their fallen Highlander and Hellsguard comrades in hopes that the demons would honor the hastily sealed covenant. The voidsent did not, and the muud suud still roam free.

Foper

As does the deepeye, the foper slips from the void into our realm by taking possession of the eye of a fallen beast. Unlike the former, however, the foper can oft prove overly selective with the vessel it is to inhabit, spending moons, if not full seasons, searching for the optics of those who have witnessed more than their share of death and suffering.

Deathgaze Hollow

The first ever recorded sighting of Deathgaze Hollow was during a chance encounter with the private airship *Lady Radlia*—an encounter that proved the massive creature a considerably more formidable foe than its counterpart from tales of legend. While its prodigious size would suggest positioning on the second rung of the voidsent hierarchy, its decided lack of intelligence has seen it rise no further than the fourth.

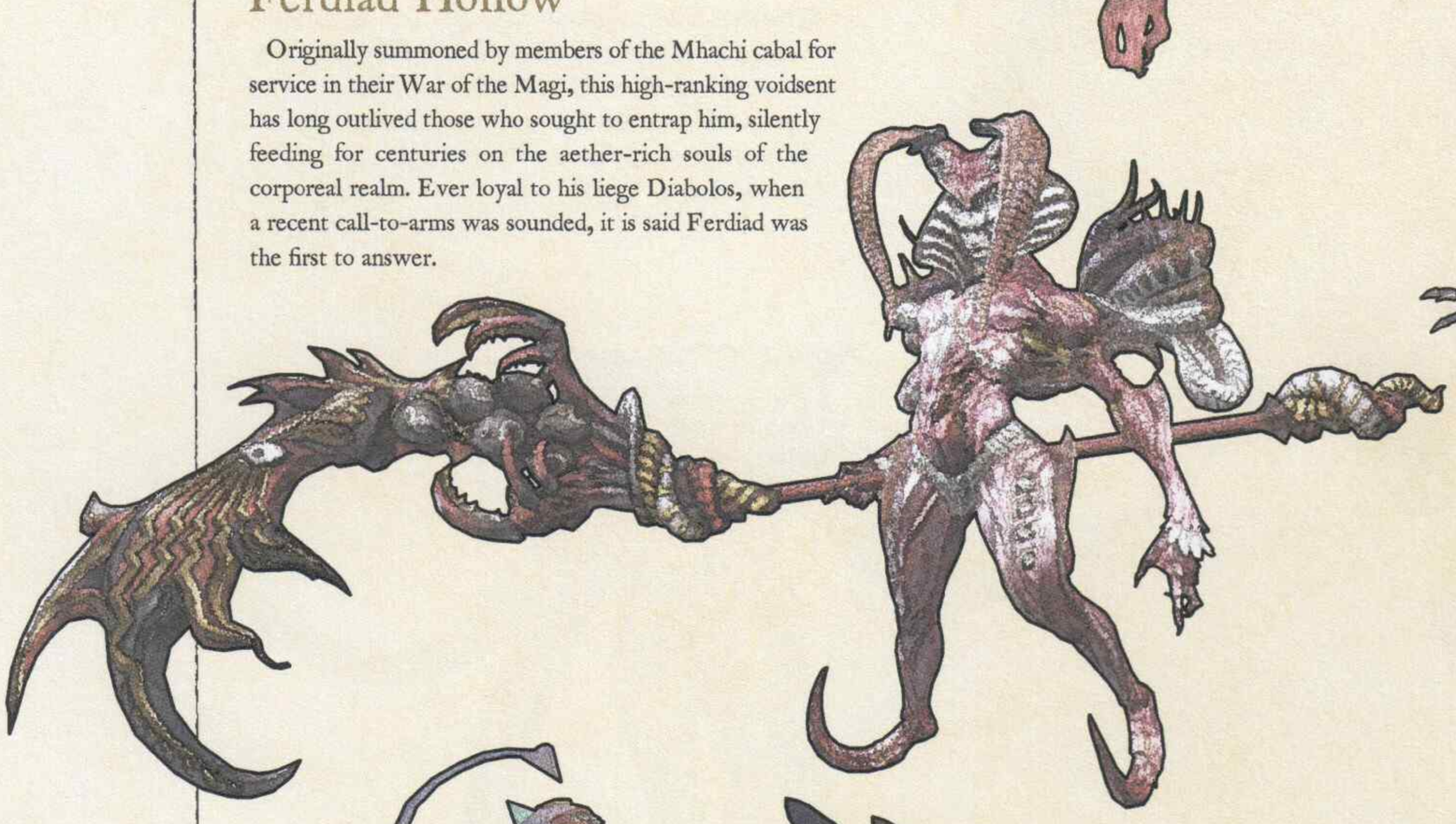


Diabolos Hollow

By absorbing the power of Scathach, Diabolos's own might was enhanced by an order of magnitude. Encased in armor of hardened shadow, and commanding ruinous new magicks, the master of nightmare boasted a strength to rival the greatest entities of the voidsent hierarchy.

Ferdiad Hollow

Originally summoned by members of the Mhachi cabal for service in their War of the Magi, this high-ranking voidsent has long outlived those who sought to entrap him, silently feeding for centuries on the aether-rich souls of the corporeal realm. Ever loyal to his liege Diabolos, when a recent call-to-arms was sounded, it is said Ferdiad was the first to answer.

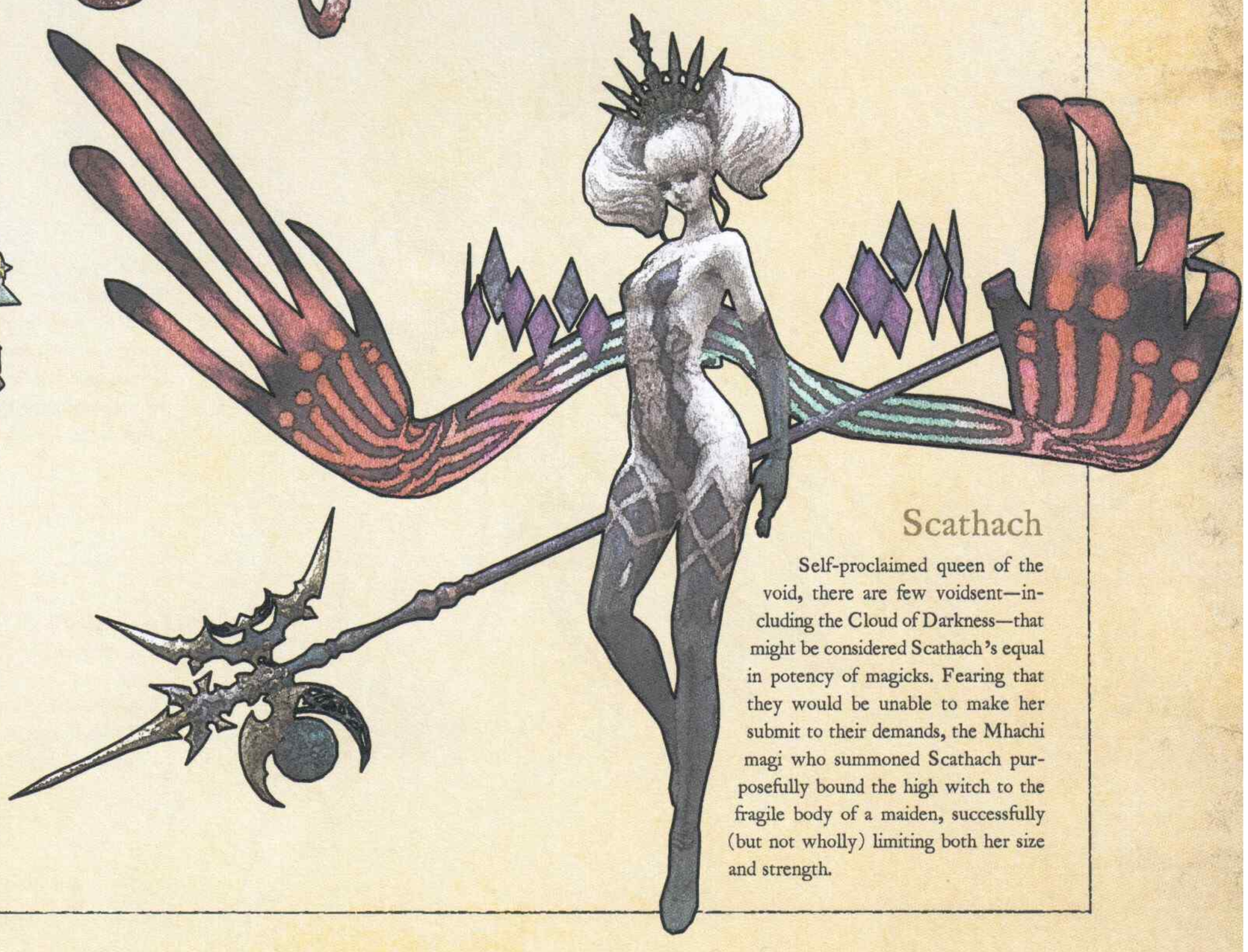


Ferdiad's Fool

The trademark of a high-ranking voidsent is his ability to use accumulated aether to summon further thralls from the void to fight by his side. These loyal subjects, while similar in build and cunning to imps or devilets, do not require vessels to survive, instead maintaining their semi-corporeal form through a transference of aetherial energies directly from their host, Ferdiad.

Chimera Poppet

One of Scathach's many pets, this miserable abomination stitched together from discarded dolls is not a "chimera" in the scientific sense, but one that hearkens back to the true meaning of the word—a twisted fusing of fur and flesh, conceived in the dark recesses of a mind wholly lost to madness.



Scathach

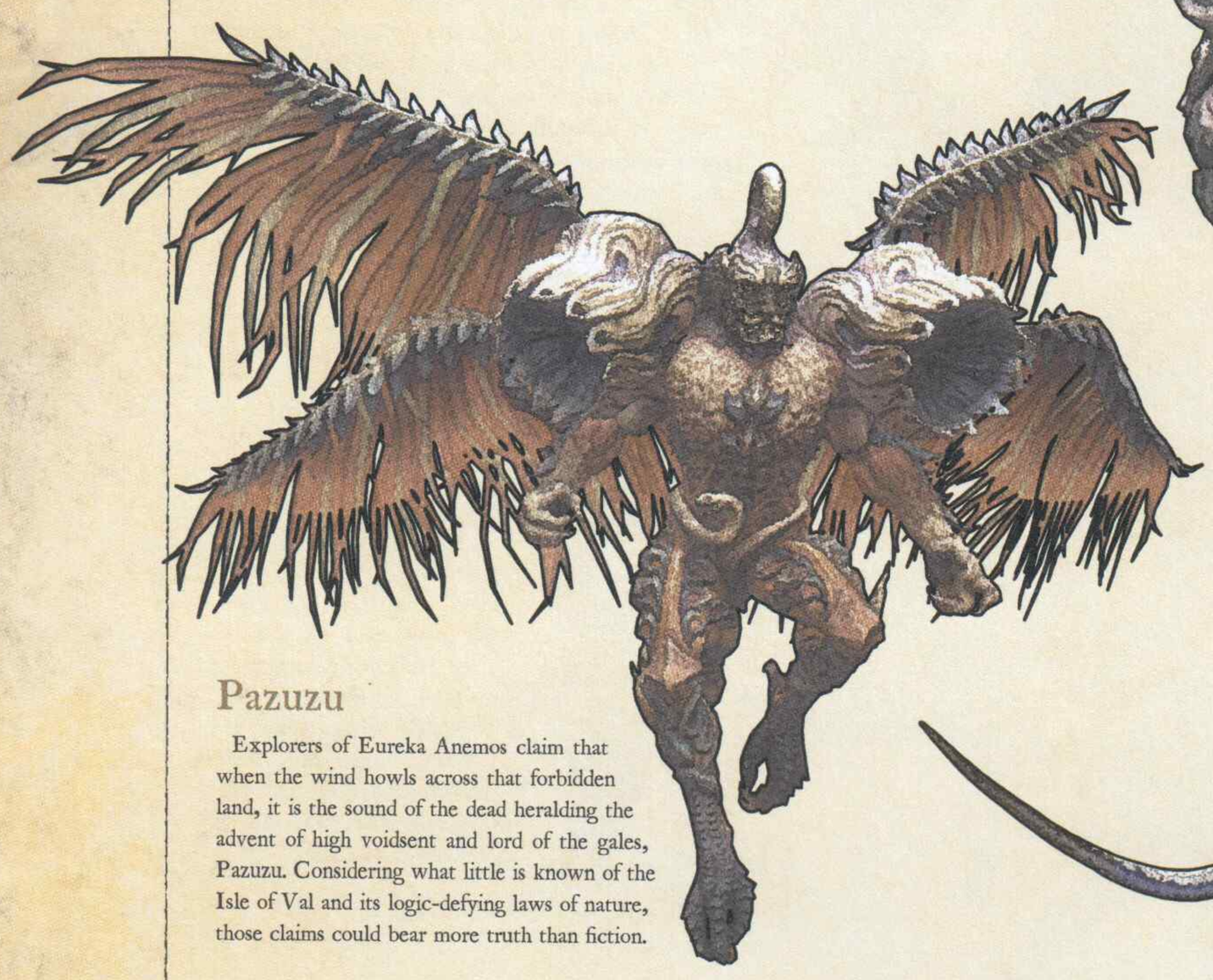
Self-proclaimed queen of the void, there are few voidsent—including the Cloud of Darkness—that might be considered Scathach's equal in potency of magicks. Fearing that they would be unable to make her submit to their demands, the Mhachi magi who summoned Scathach purposefully bound the high witch to the fragile body of a maiden, successfully (but not wholly) limiting both her size and strength.

Caym

Situated squarely on the fifth rung of the voidsent hierarchy, the raptor-like Caym has a long history of frequenting the corporeal realm. Kings from ages as far back as the Third Astral Era were said to covet the creature's unparalleled cunning and mastery of a thousand tongues, and would oft risk Caym's summoning with the hopes that the voidsent would serve them as chancellor.

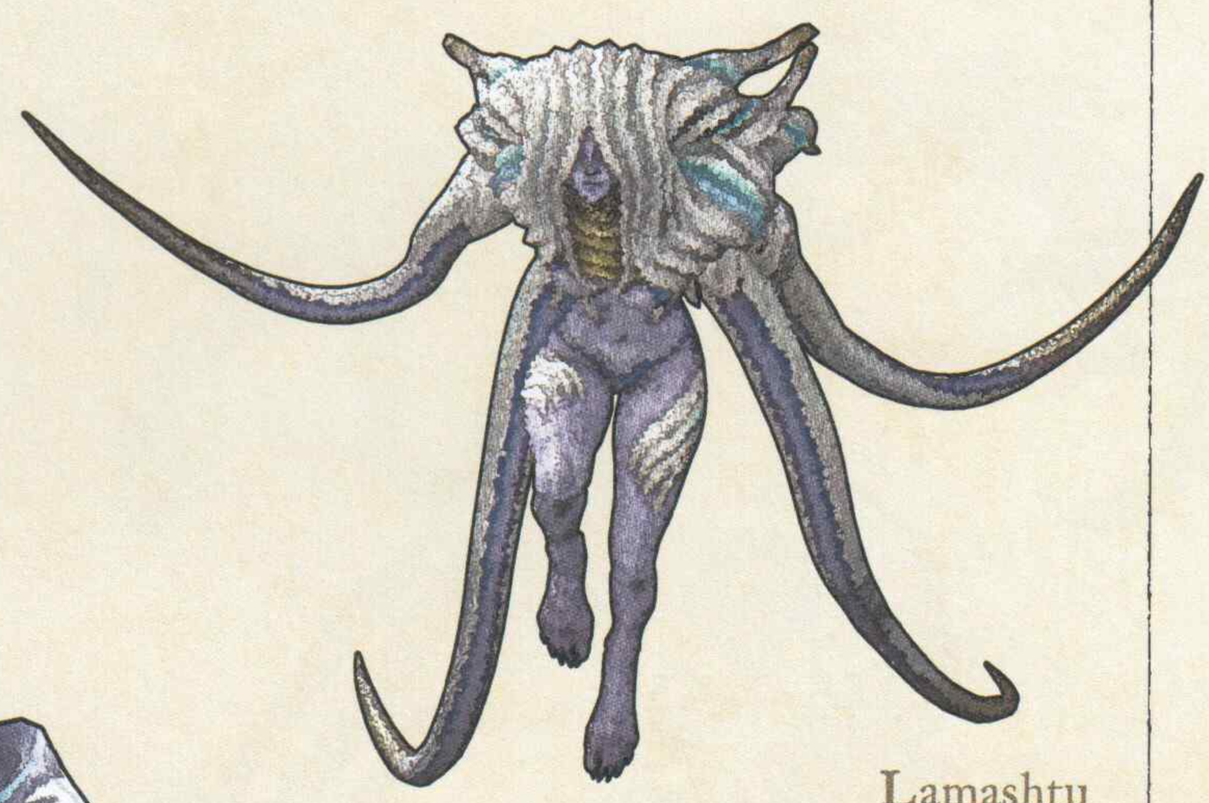
Bombadeel

Hyperbole can be employed to suggest that the stench of rotting goobbue seven days dead is enough to kill a man. If that rotting goobbue, however, is being used as a vessel for a voracious voidsent host, then the need for hyperbole is no more. No creature on all Hydaelyn can claim an odor more foul.



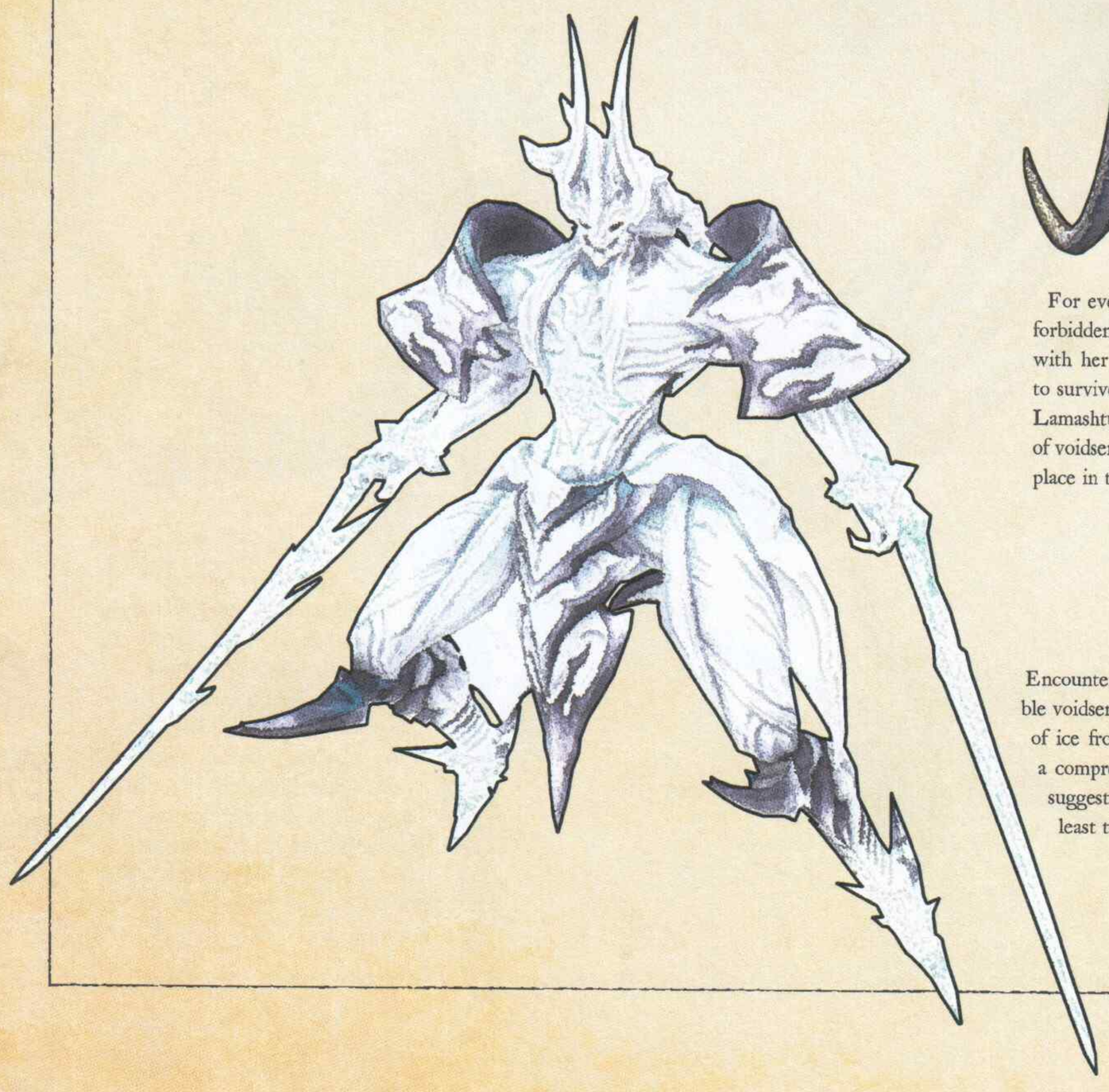
Pazuzu

Explorers of Eureka Anemos claim that when the wind howls across that forbidden land, it is the sound of the dead heralding the advent of high voidsent and lord of the gales, Pazuzu. Considering what little is known of the Isle of Val and its logic-defying laws of nature, those claims could bear more truth than fiction.



Lamashtu

For every ten adventurers foolhardy enough to venture onto the forbidden shores of Val, fate might see one return from the mist with her mind intact. Using what little information does manage to survive the journey home, void scholars have deemed the deadly Lamashtu a consort of Pazuzu and position her in the fourth rung of voidsent hierarchy, considerably lower than her liege, whom they place in the second.



Louhi

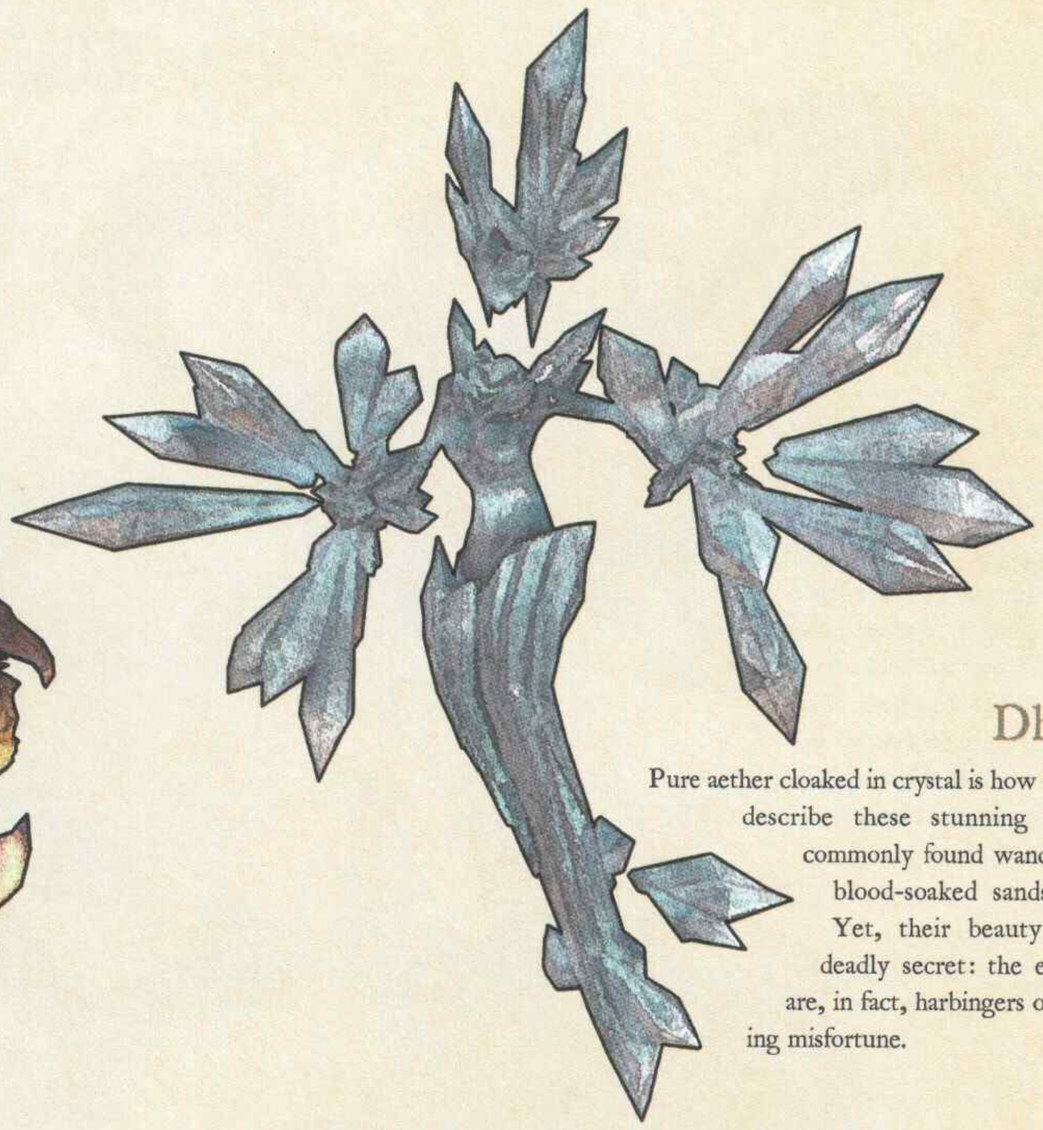
Encountered in the frozen wasteland of Eureka Pagos, this formidable voidsent employs his immense arcane strength to condense blades of ice from the surrounding aether. Scholars have yet to perform a comprehensive study, but the presence of numerous underlings suggests that in the voidsent hierarchy, Louhi holds at the very least the rank of lesser noble.

Elementals

Elementals are naturally occurring beings almost solely comprised of concentrated and localized aether. Not usually bound to the constraints of a corporeal body, many of these semi-intelligent beings will contort their shapes, taking on the approximate forms of nearby beings, be they animal, vegetable, or mineral. Or, in some cases, man.

Anala

Mankind can consider itself fortunate that the climes preferred by these deadly sprites are much too harsh for man to frequent, let alone reside within. Yet those foolish enough to brave the heart of an angry volcano may find themselves face-to-face with the very embodiment of flame, a sword of dancing fire licking at their throats.

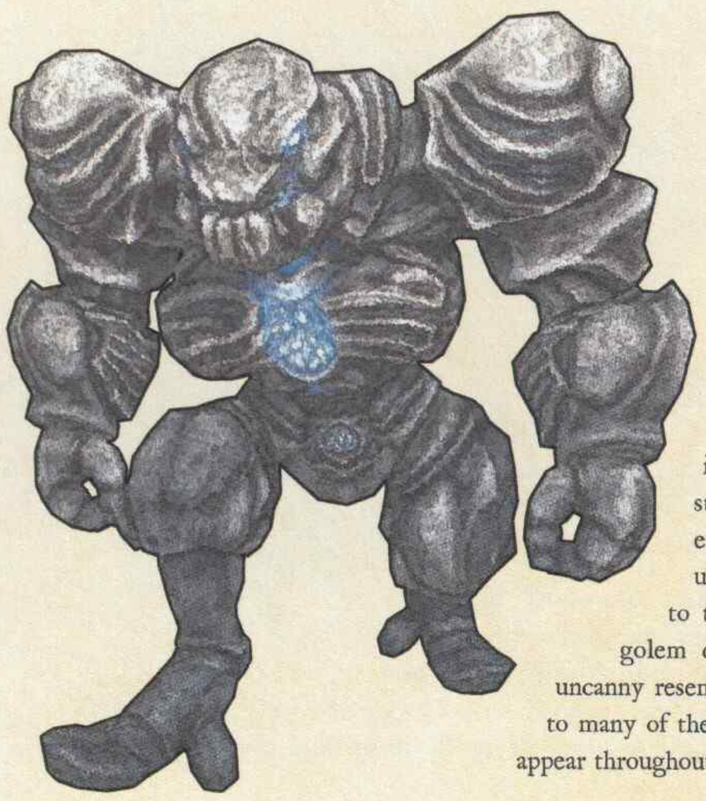


Dhruva

Pure aether cloaked in crystal is how one might describe these stunning creatures commonly found wandering the blood-soaked sands of war. Yet, their beauty belies a deadly secret: the elementals are, in fact, harbingers of impending misfortune.

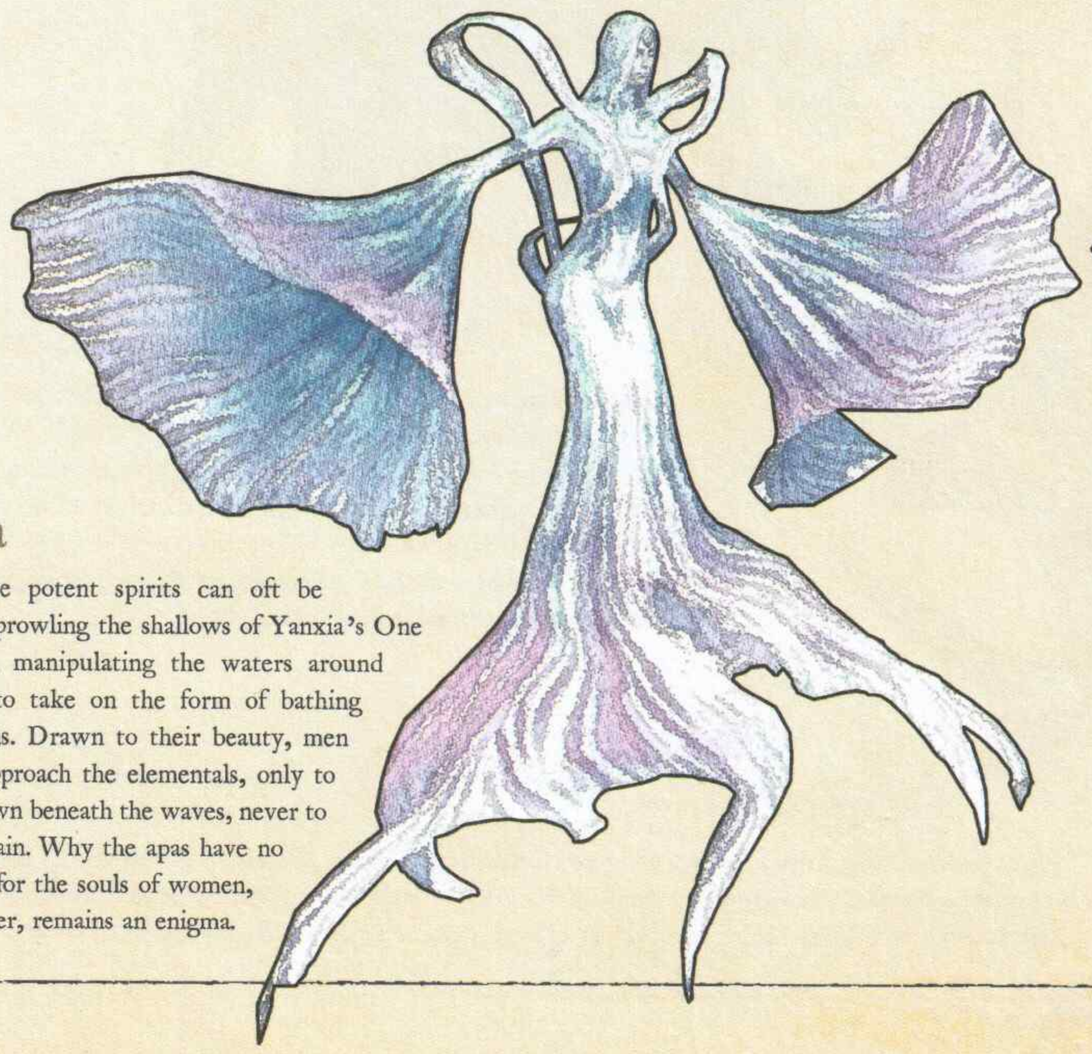
Anila

Anilas are dreadful creatures whose incessant gyrations birth hot, sand-filled storms that ruin crops and send caravans tumbling from canyon-tops. Most are solitary creatures, but when two or more gather, they join together as one, combining their strength to form a nigh-unstoppable dervish of death and destruction.



Dhara

Not commonly is it known that the study of these powerful earth elementals ultimately gave rise to the forbidden art of golem creation—hence the uncanny resemblance of the dhara to many of the iconic soulkin who appear throughout history and legend.



Apa

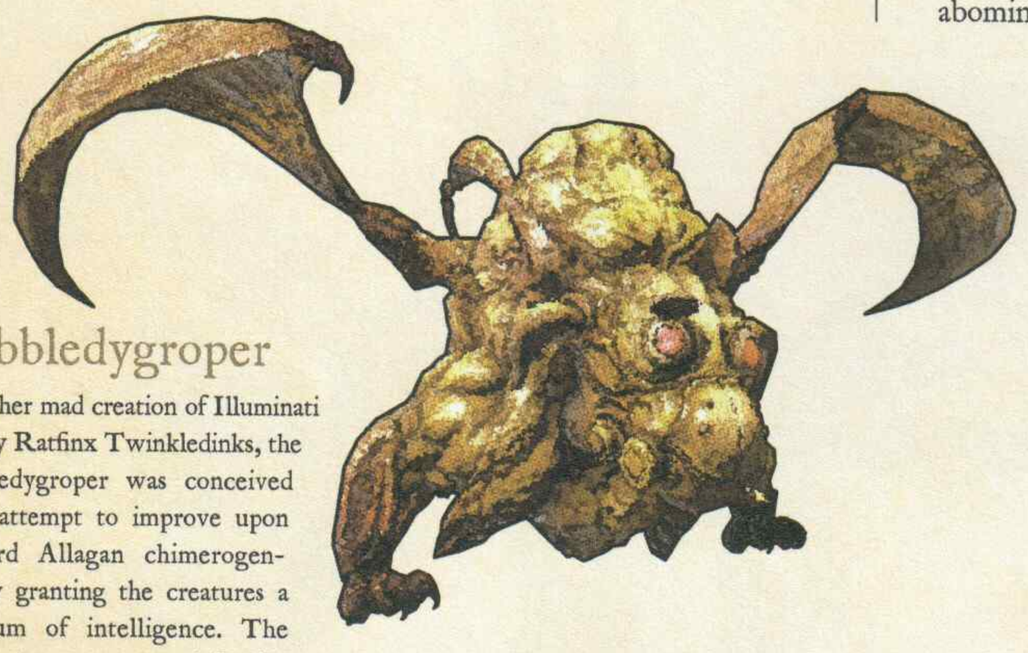
These potent spirits can oft be found prowling the shallows of Yanxia's One River, manipulating the waters around them to take on the form of bathing maidens. Drawn to their beauty, men will approach the elementals, only to be drawn beneath the waves, never to rise again. Why the apas have no desire for the souls of women, however, remains an enigma.

Happy Bunny

Countless sightings of the tritely named "happy bunny" suggest that this bringer of good fortune is more than just the figment of an overtaxed adventurer's addled mind. Yet how a creature so seemingly small and insignificant could survive on an island that has sent more seasoned warriors to the Lifestream than any recent war is beyond the ken of both Eurekan naturalist and expeditionary alike.

CHIMERAS

Simply stated, chimeras are creatures created by conjoining the flesh from two or more different beings. The process is highly complex, and was only perfected in the waning years of the Allagan Empire—the culmination of nearly an entire era's biological research. Until recently, reproduction of these techniques was believed impossible, but breakthroughs made by both Garlean engineers and goblin scientists of the Illuminati have seen an influx of the godless abominations throughout the realm.

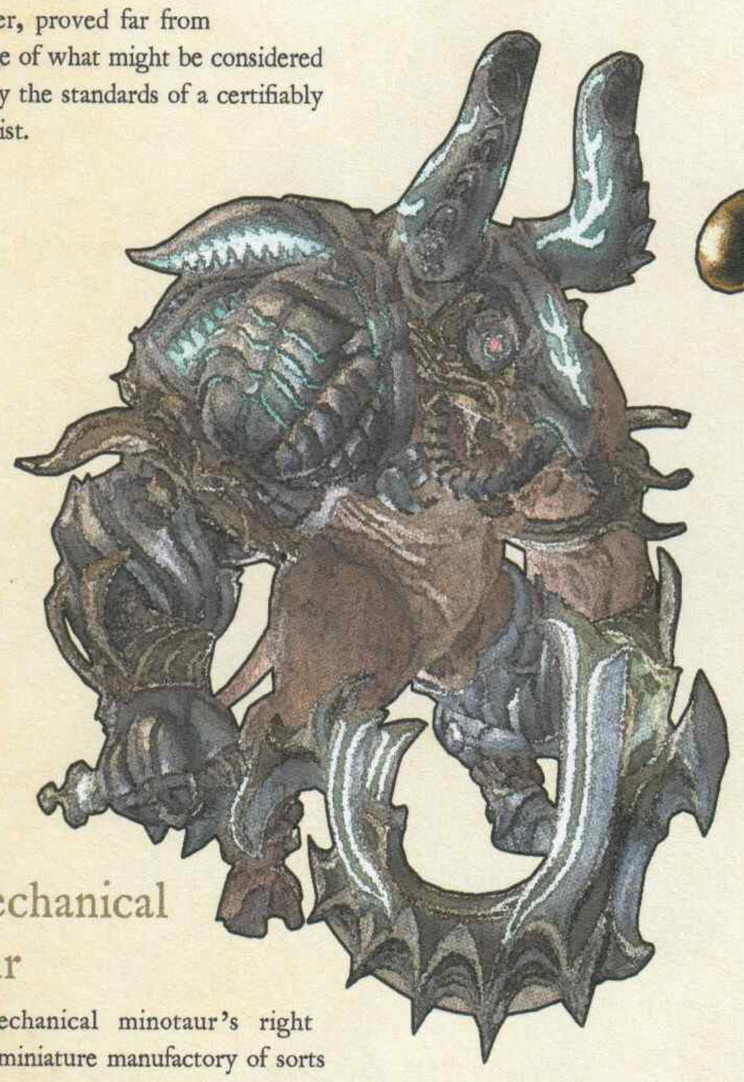


Gobbledygroper

Another mad creation of Illuminati prodigy Ratfinx Twinkledinks, the Gobbledygroper was conceived in an attempt to improve upon standard Allagan chimerogenesis by granting the creatures a modicum of intelligence. The results, however, proved far from within the range of what might be considered success, even by the standards of a certifiably deranged scientist.

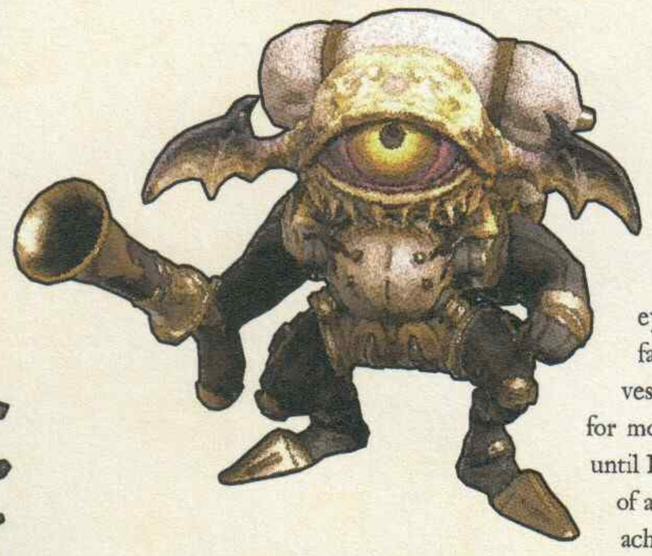
Hypertuned

An unexpected byproduct of the Garlean Empire's research into the divine phenomenon most commonly known as the "Echo," these laboratory-born creatures serve but a single purpose—to act as intermediaries, drawing aetherial energy from one medium and transferring it to another.



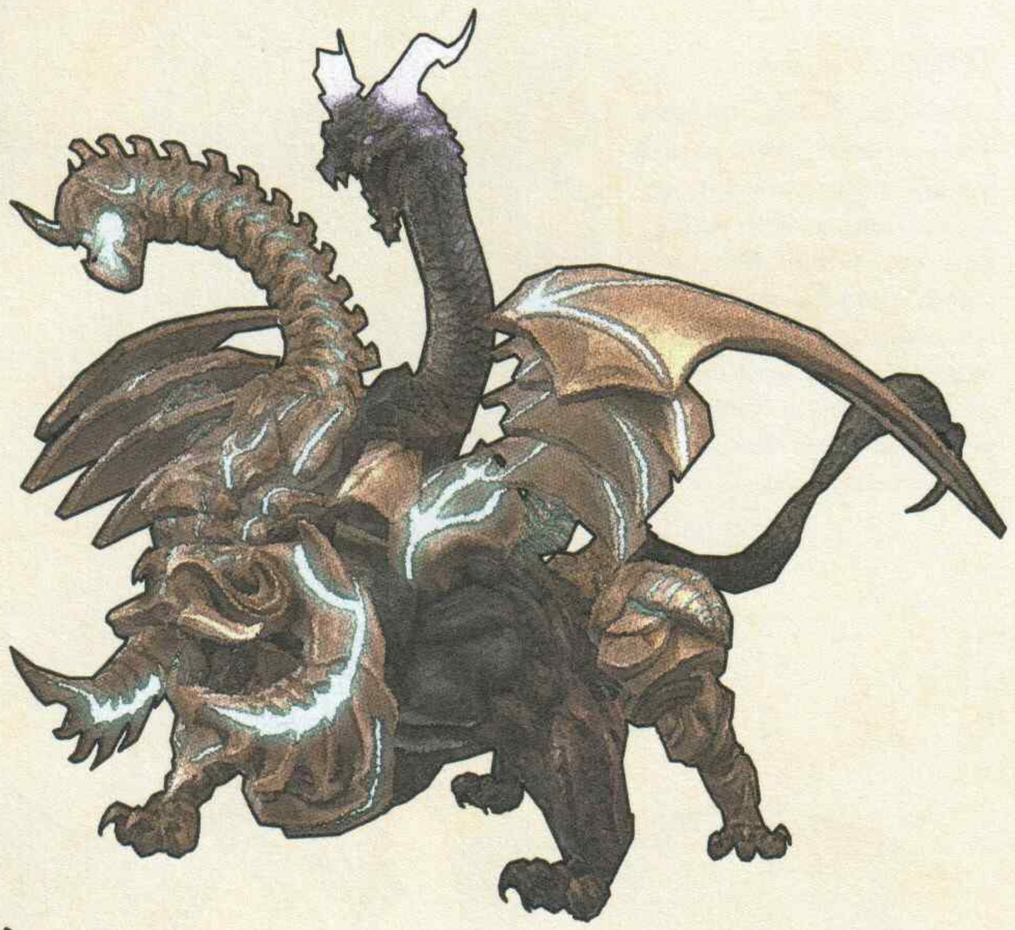
Servomechanical Minotaur

The servomechanical minotaur's right arm contains a miniature manufactory of sorts wherein an aetherochemical compound is concocted and periodically pumped into the host's body. This potent potation grants the chimera enhanced strength for as long as the heavily fortified limb remains operational.



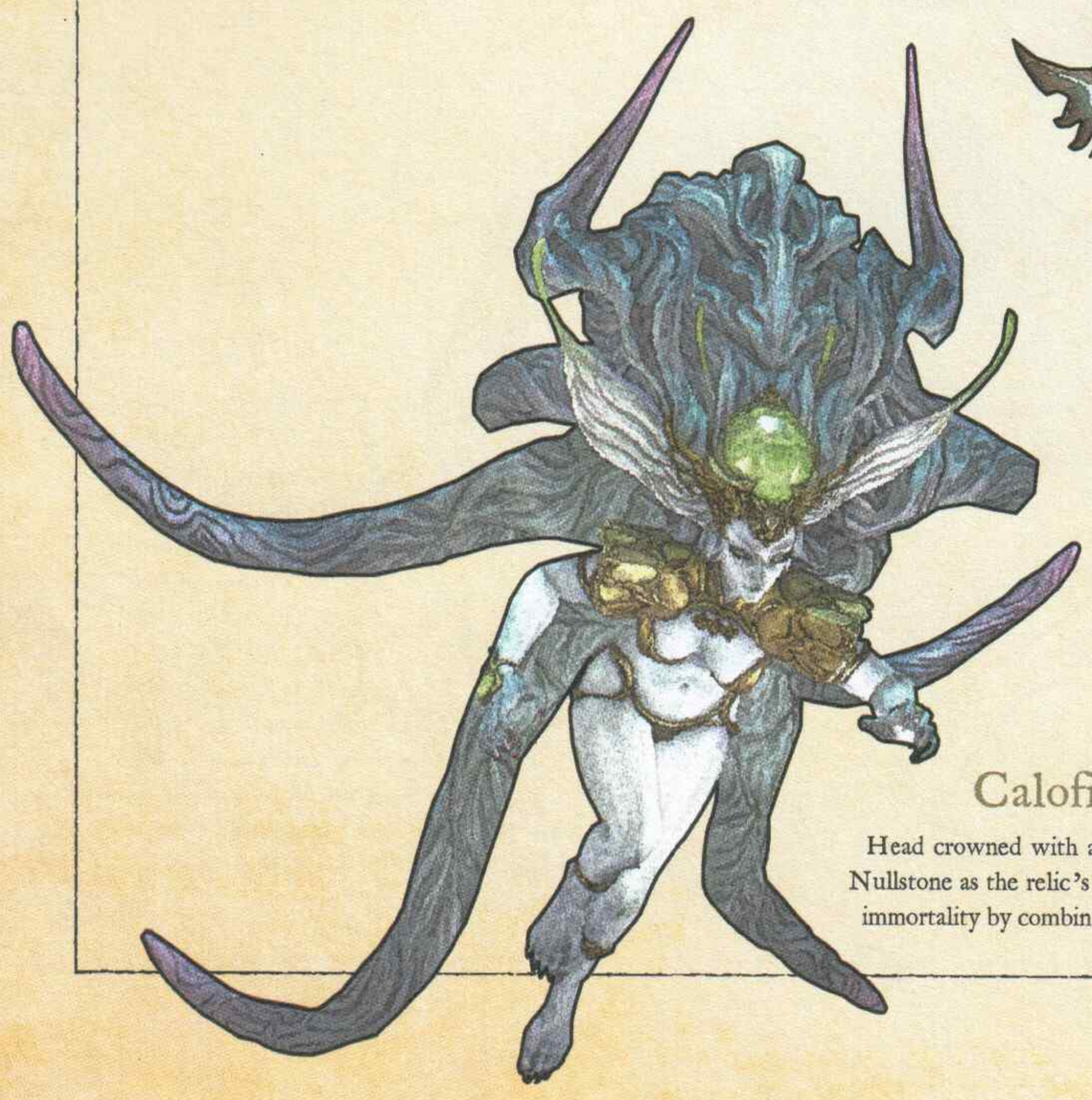
Gobbledygawker

The creation of this obscenity can be attributed to none other than the nefarious Illuminati scientist Ratfinx Twinkledinks. Early experiments grafting ahriman eyes to goblin cadavers all ended in failure, the voidsent rejecting its new vessel—unwilling or unable to inhabit it for more than a few moments. It was not until Ratfinx grafted the eye onto the body of a living goblin that true symbiosis was achieved.



Servomechanical Chimera

Quickly learning that despite enhanced strength, speed, and agility, their creations were just as susceptible to an enemy's munitions as any other biological entity, Allagan scientists began experimenting with replacing the majority of fleshy components with ones of cermet and steel. The anti-dragon initiative Kaliya was one of the first of these hybrids to be tested in the field, subsequent performance reports leading to the perfection of the servomechanical chimera.



Calofisteri

Head crowned with animate tresses and mind caressed by madness, Calofisteri haunts the Tomb of the Nullstone as the relic's self-appointed guardian. This mighty sorceress of Mhach achieved a twisted form of immortality by combining the power of aether-infused crystal with the ritual consumption of voidsent blood.

ELITE MARKS

The world is rife with all manner of evil, but deep in the shadows there lurk some beings so nefarious the mere mention of their names can fill a hero's heart with dread. These fiends and freebooters, monsters and machina are the "elite," and there are those who will stop at nothing to rid the realm of their terror, offering rich rewards to see them slain.

The Hunt

To abate the threat of notorious beasts roaming free in the wilds, the Eorzean Alliance established an organized culling commonly known as the Hunt. Yet rather than assign this duty to their respective armies and risk a lessening of their ranks, the leaders of the Grand Companies instead petitioned that the tasks be assigned to adventurers and mercenaries. With a bounty on the heads of myriad menacing monsters, adventurers seeking danger and glory could now take up arms, find their marks, and reap the renown of tracking and defeating the realm's most dangerous game.

The independently operated Clan Centurio—brought together by Ser Leaudaste of Ishgard and colorfully known as a "ragtag band of glory hunters, mercenaries, and has-beens"—has also taken it upon itself to rid the land of deplorables, collecting coin from the citizenry with the promise that the clan will see the realm safe. This feat they achieve by offering a portion of the amassed gil as reward to any hunter brave or foolish enough to fell the marks.

Hunt boards plastered with the latest mark bills can now be found in almost every large settlement from Eorzea to Hingashi. Bills contain much of the information an aspiring hunter needs to know about his quarry. But without the proper seal, a kill will earn him little more than a pat on the back.

The following are excerpts taken from an official Clan Centurio mark log—a comprehensive collection of rumors and sightings compiled over centuries by past hunters. As such, some of the entries tend to be a tad more colorful than what one may find in a normal bestiary.

Middle La Noscea

RANK B Skogs Fru

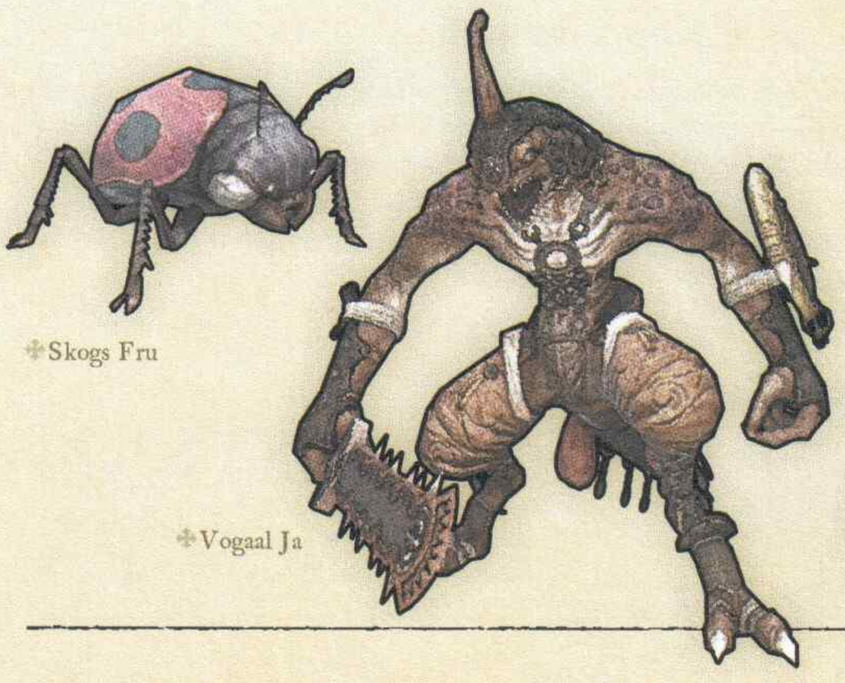
The ravening queen of ladybugs, Skogs Fru's natural voracity for pests has taken an unnatural turn. Not content with emptying the fields of pollen carriers and soil tillers, the adamantine-shelled vilekin has adopted a new diet consisting of chocobos and their riders.

RANK A Vogaal Ja

Vogaal Ja is a Mamool Ja sellsword of particularly ill repute—known to be as cruel as he is suspicious, and as suspicious as he is displeasing to the eye. A real prince among men, the bastard claims his inability to find contracts is a result of his perpetually grim visage, when, to hear the smallfolk tell it, the true reason lies in Ja's tendency to slay his clients over disagreements in proper recompense.

RANK S Croque-mitaine

While gardening has long been a craft rich in obsession and madness, the goobbue Croque-mitaine has taken the legacy to new extremes. From the river whose water irrigates the artful plantings upon his head to the pastures rich in worm castings, the creature keeps a jealous eye on the many wild places that supply his cephalic paradise. Many an unwary orchid hunter, vermicomposter, and moss monger seeking rich loam have met their end at Croque-mitaine's hands, and his green thumb is well stained with their life's blood.

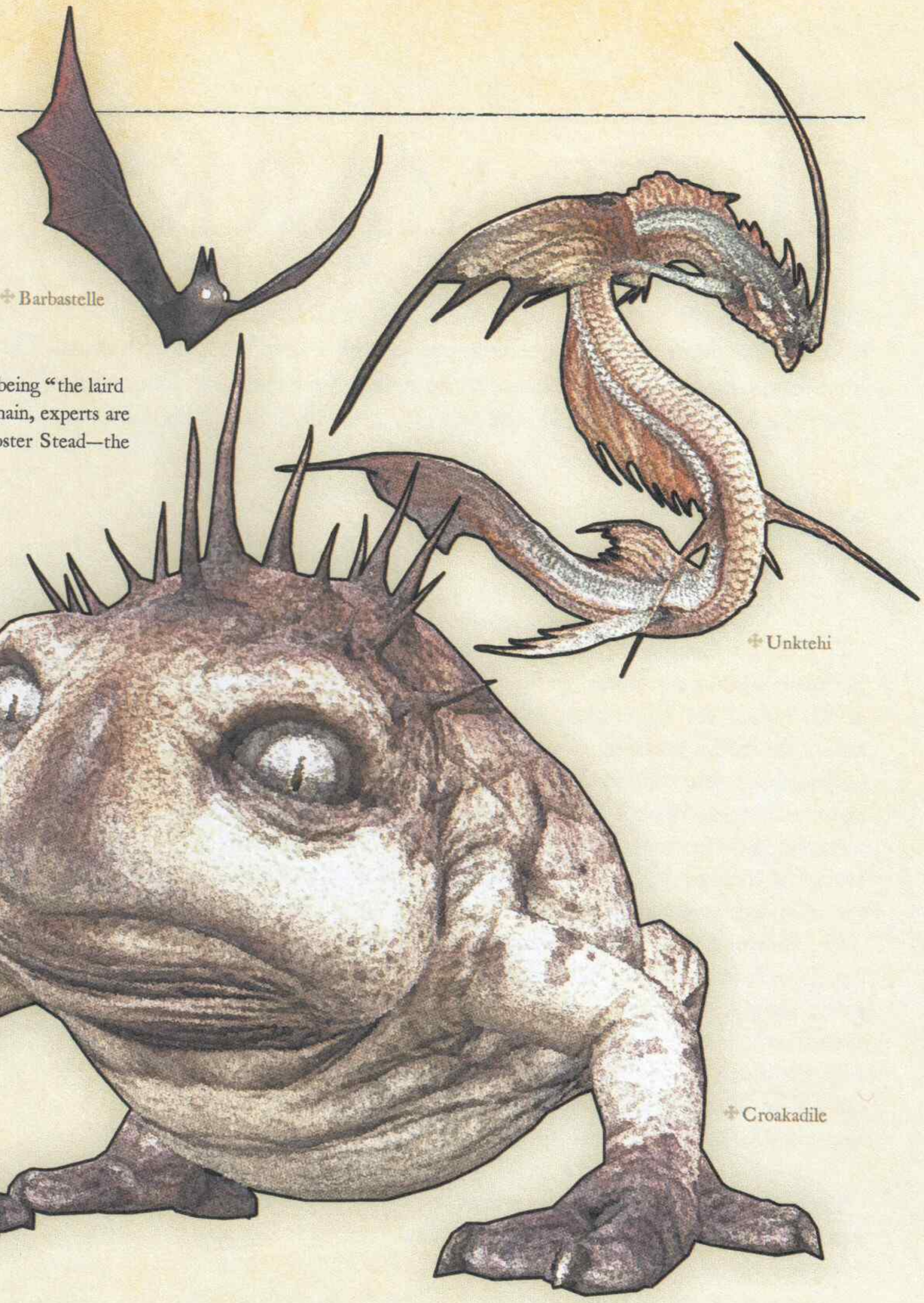


✣Skogs Fru

✣Vogaal Ja

✣Croque-mitaine

Lower La Noscea



Barbastelle

Unktehi

Croakadile

RANK B Barbastelle

The vampire bat Barbastelle has many epithets, the only remotely flattering one being "the laird of Blind Iron Mines." While cattle mutilations are hardly any one creature's domain, experts are united in the view that the infamous mass draining of the herd at the Red Rooster Stead—the so-called "Big Gulp"—is the work of this very cloudkin.

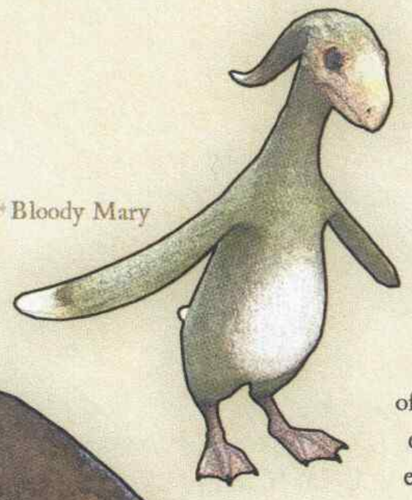
RANK A Unktehi

Long have the superstitious coasters along Moraby Bay corrected their children with tales of Unktehi, the sea-dwelling eater of man-flesh. What was once considered a mere fancy of ignorant folk has proven disagreeably real, and Unktehi's excursions onto land have left the population fearful—and fewer.

RANK S Croakadile

Frogs of inconvenient size are legion, but surprisingly few of them seek fodder commensurate with their size. The Croakadile is one such unwelcome surprise. The first known victim during the present manifestation is reported to be a franklin who felt his ring slip off during a nightly walk with his lady. He turned back down the path, and his lady saw him reach down just as the moon took cover behind a cloud. When the moonlight returned, he had vanished.

Hellsclaw



Bloody Mary

The Garlock

RANK B Bloody Mary

Bloody Mary is oft cited as the example of an unstoppable force—Qiqirn gluttony—meeting an immovable object—maternal love. Such characterization would not pass muster beyond the confines of a winesink, however, and is known to provoke dissent even in those establishments. While the land-bound cloudkin is indeed an apkallu whose eggs suffered Qiqirn predation, nesting hens as a rule do not spear a failed egg thief a score and a half times with their beaks, then proceed to bathe in their victim's blood.

RANK A Hellsclaw

So erratic yet bloody a swath has this piece of magitek cut across the region that it is suspected of being sadly afflicted in some way. So much for the infallibility of Garlean technology.

RANK S The Garlock

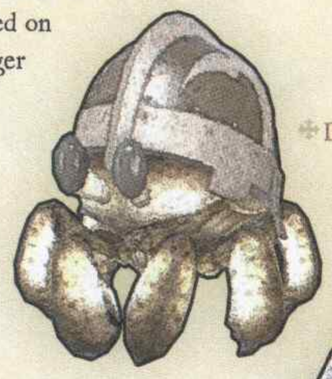
A monster long said to dwell in the eternal twilight of a cavern, the Garlok was but an idle tale for generations of Bloodshore's children. However, one child was ill content to be idle, and his name was Gegeruju, the master of Costa del Sol. At his command, a party entered the cavern in search of the Garlok. They found the beast slumbering sheltered from the rain, and promptly proceeded to wake it, only to learn it was more than a mite annoyed at being roused so rudely.

Eastern La Noscea

Western La Noscea

RANK B Dark Helmet

A hermit crab of less eremitic bent, Dark Helmet began its love affair with armor when it traded in its snail shell for some nameless Lalafell's helm. Its salvaging ways abandoned on the sands alongside outgrown and rusted headgear, Dark Helmet lives to acquire larger and finer heaumes—often still occupied by their former owners' grey matter.



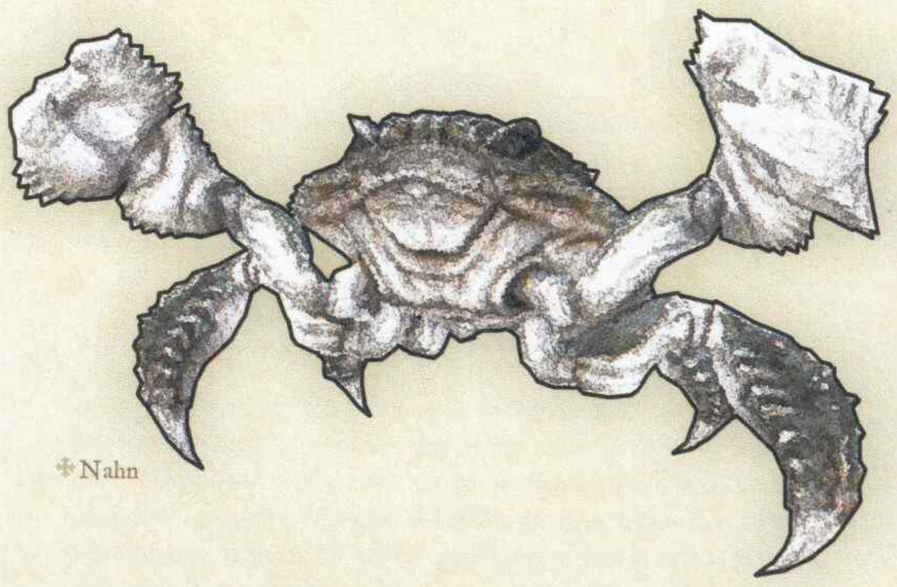
Dark Helmet

RANK A Nahn

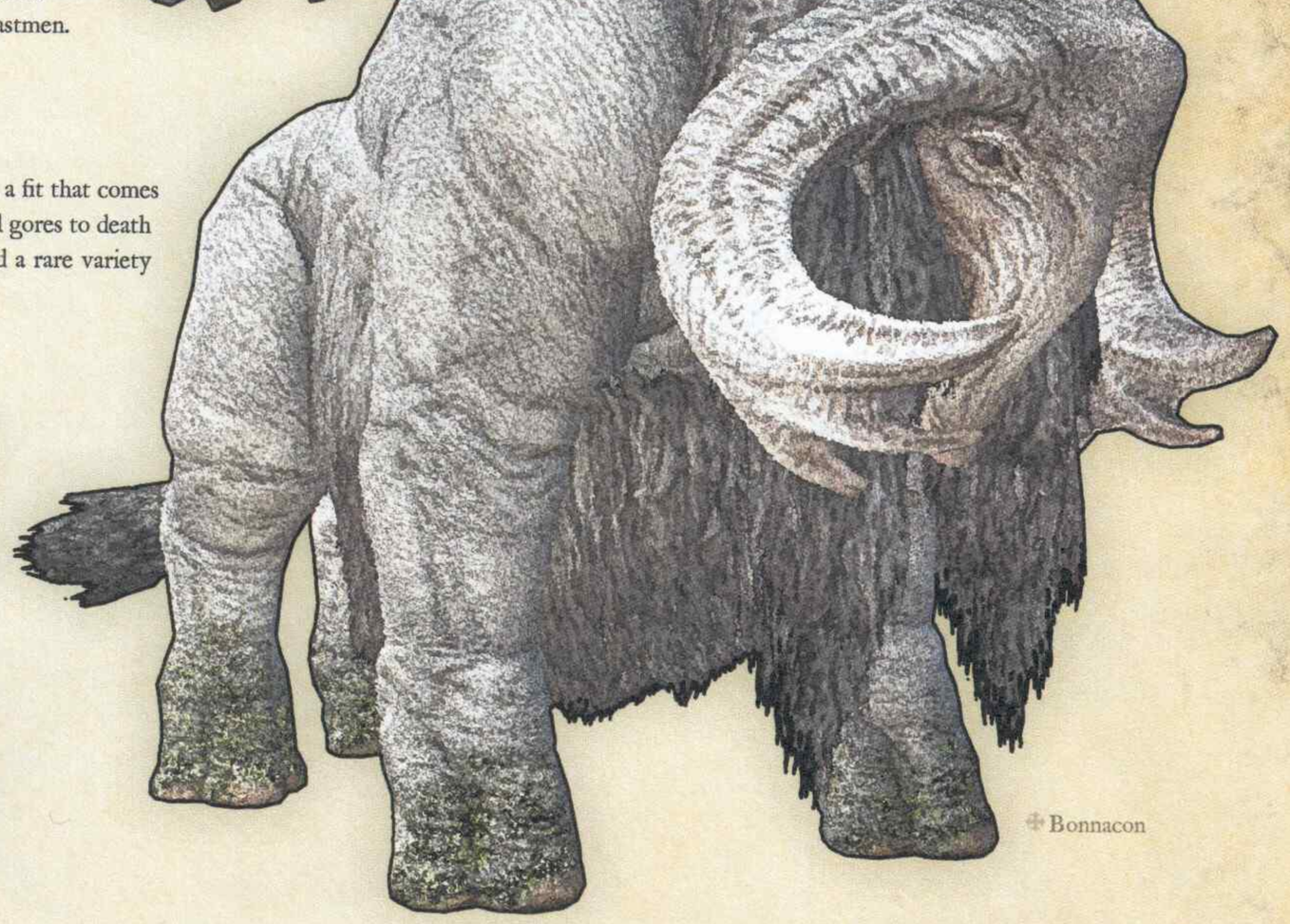
A native of the Indigo Deep, Nahn is a gargantuan man-eating crustacean. Its actual name is unpronounceable except under the crushing press of water. The Sahagin of the Sapsa Spawning Grounds are responsible for bringing Nahn to shore to serve as a living weapon against the Maelstrom and others inimical to the beastmen.

RANK S Bonnacon

Once known as a mild and even affectionate beast, Bonnacon is afflicted with a fit that comes upon him like a caul of fire. Tossing his great head in torment and rage, this bull gores to death his unfortunate victims, many of them greengrocers. Phrontists have implicated a rare variety of vegetable—its smell, to be precise—in triggering the violent attack.

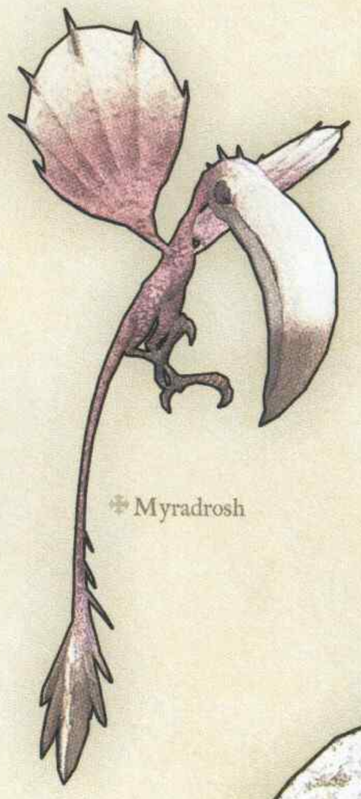


Nahn



Bonnacon

Marberry



Myradrosh

RANK B Myradrosh

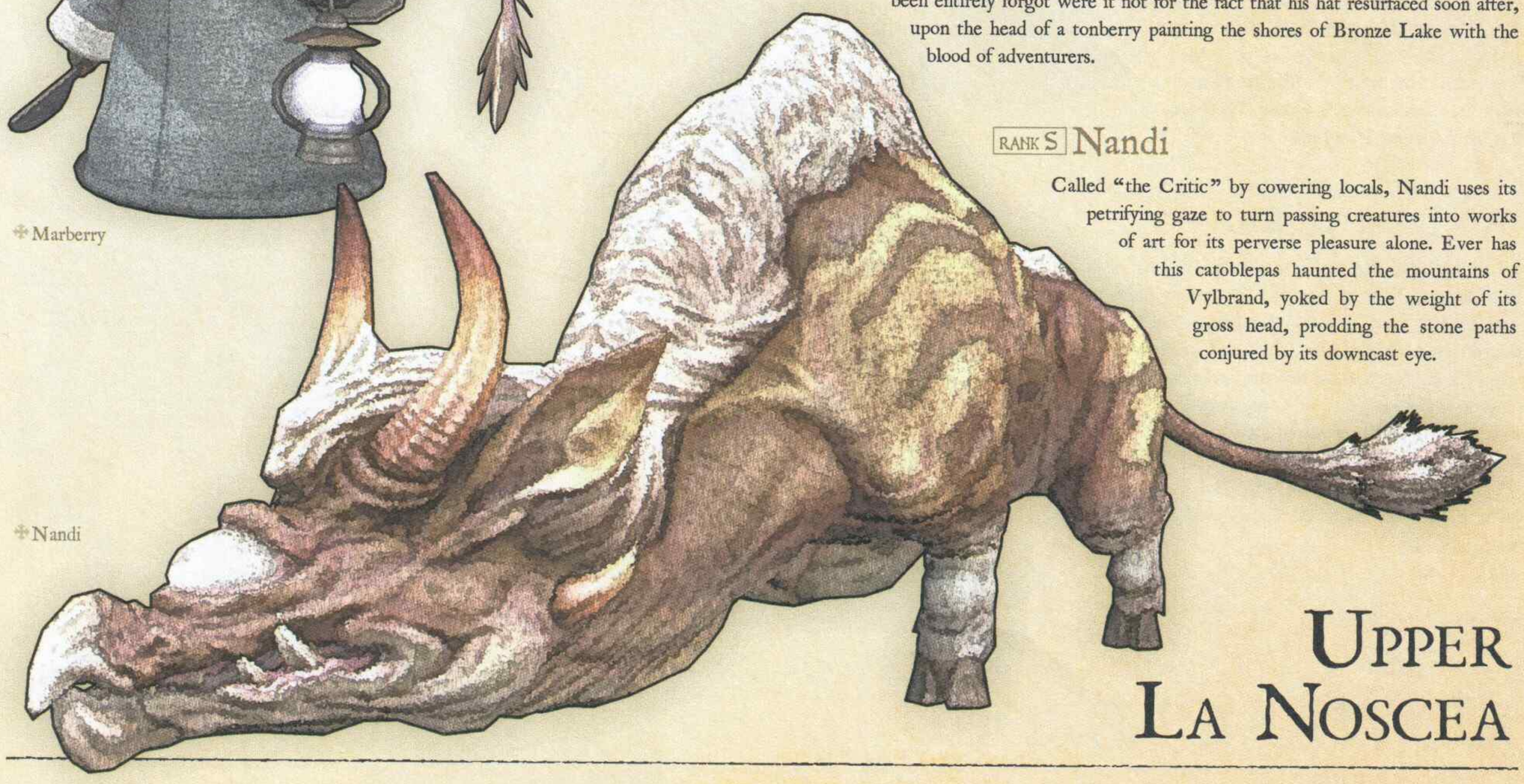
The nectar-eaters of Eorzea are partial to blooms of different hues. Red flowers such as Oschon roselles and raincatchers are the preferred feed of colibri. Being one such bird, Myradrosh became so fixated on that hue that it now sups from the reddest flower of them all—the still-warm flesh of other birds, beasts, and men.

RANK A Marberry

Of the scores of thaumaturges lost questing for the Wanderer's Palace, Maruta Noruta was perhaps the least remarkable. Aside from the Lalafellin adventurer's singular yet unflattering hat, little of him is remembered. It is likely he would have been entirely forgot were it not for the fact that his hat resurfaced soon after, upon the head of a tonberry painting the shores of Bronze Lake with the blood of adventurers.

RANK S Nandi

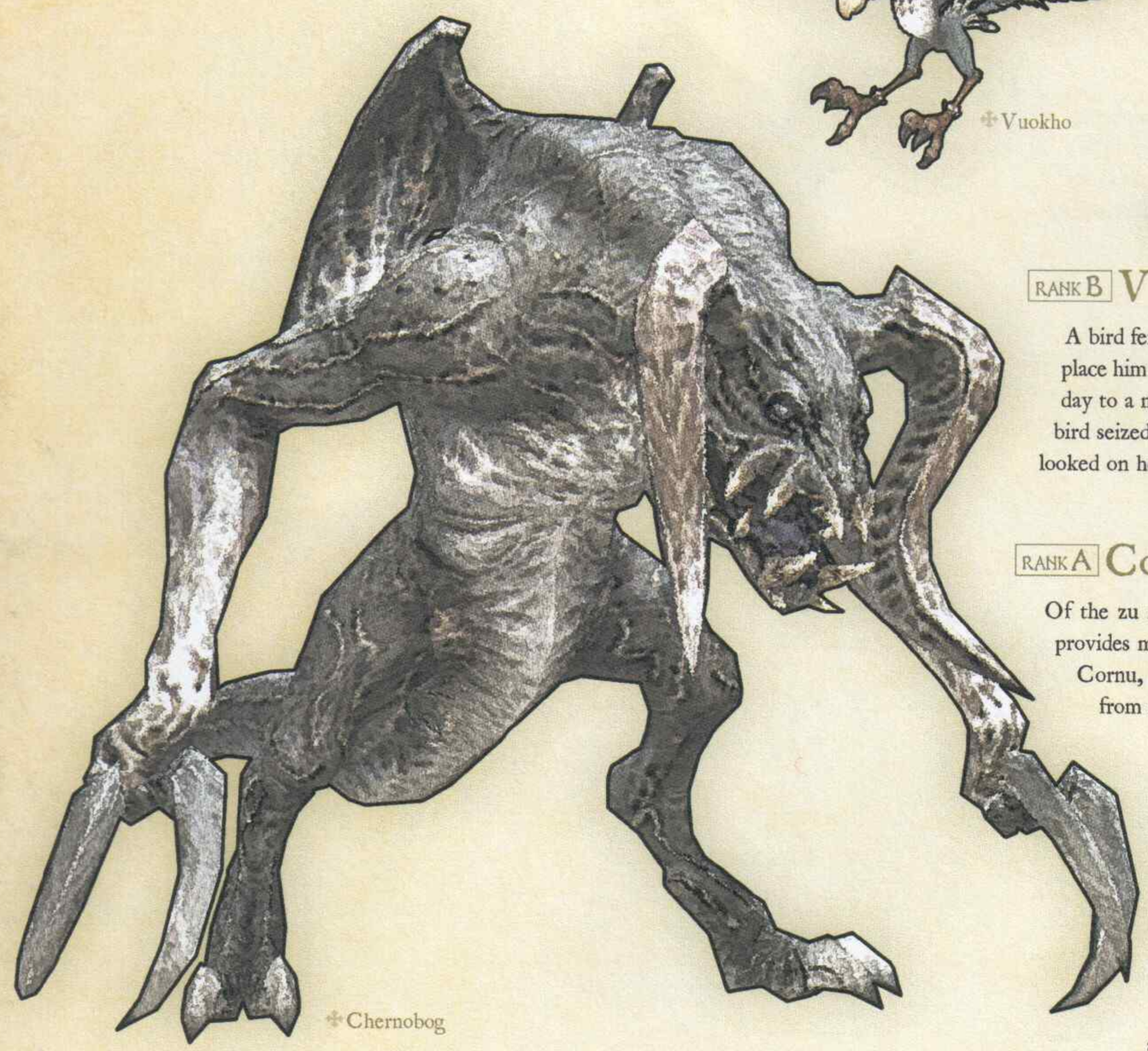
Called "the Critic" by cowering locals, Nandi uses its petrifying gaze to turn passing creatures into works of art for its perverse pleasure alone. Ever has this catoblepas haunted the mountains of Vylbrand, yoked by the weight of its gross head, prodding the stone paths conjured by its downcast eye.



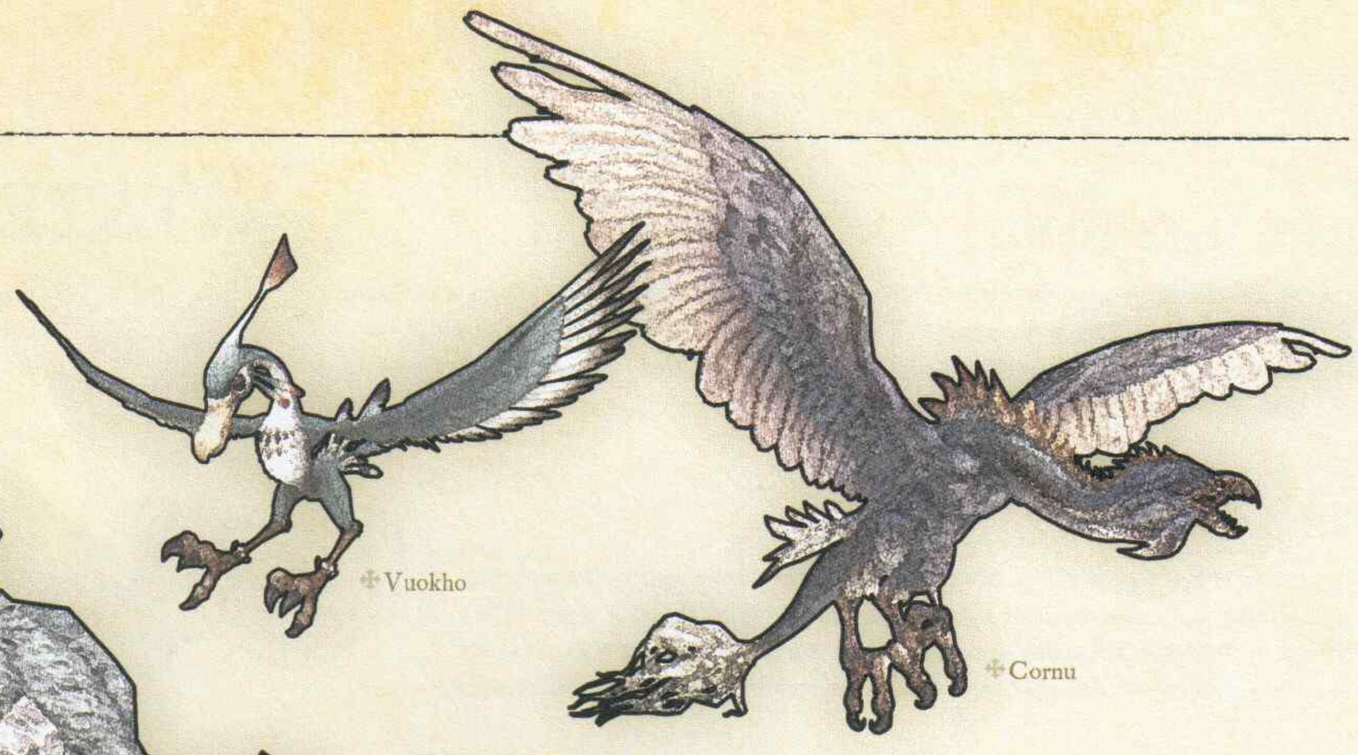
Nandi

Upper La Noscea

Outer La Noscea



Chernobog



Vuokho

Cornu

RANK B Vuokho

A bird feral is a deadly thing, and none more so than the condor Vuokho. Witnesses place him at the Nym Massacre, which consigned some of the finest naturalists of the day to a mean and early grave. What was not consumed on the spot, the murderous bird seized whole and took to its aery, even as the staunchest among the Maelstrom looked on helplessly, their eyes leaking at the horror.

RANK A Cornu

Of the zu much is known, for their migration between Eorzea and the Near East provides many opportunities for observation. The vilest among these birds of prey is Cornu, which has made itself maddeningly scarce to learned eyes that would pry from it the secrets of its savage heart.

RANK S Chernobog

In death does Chernobog find its purpose, and so the scent of corse flower is sweet to this creature. A stele unearthed at Nym records that Chernobog was summoned during the War of the Magi in the Fifth Astral Era, for the conquest of the Floating City. The ploy failed and Chernobog was bound at great cost, by the efforts of some two score phrontists of Nym. What broke the tethers is not known, though there are theories ranging from the Calamity to the humble weevil.

RANK B White Joker

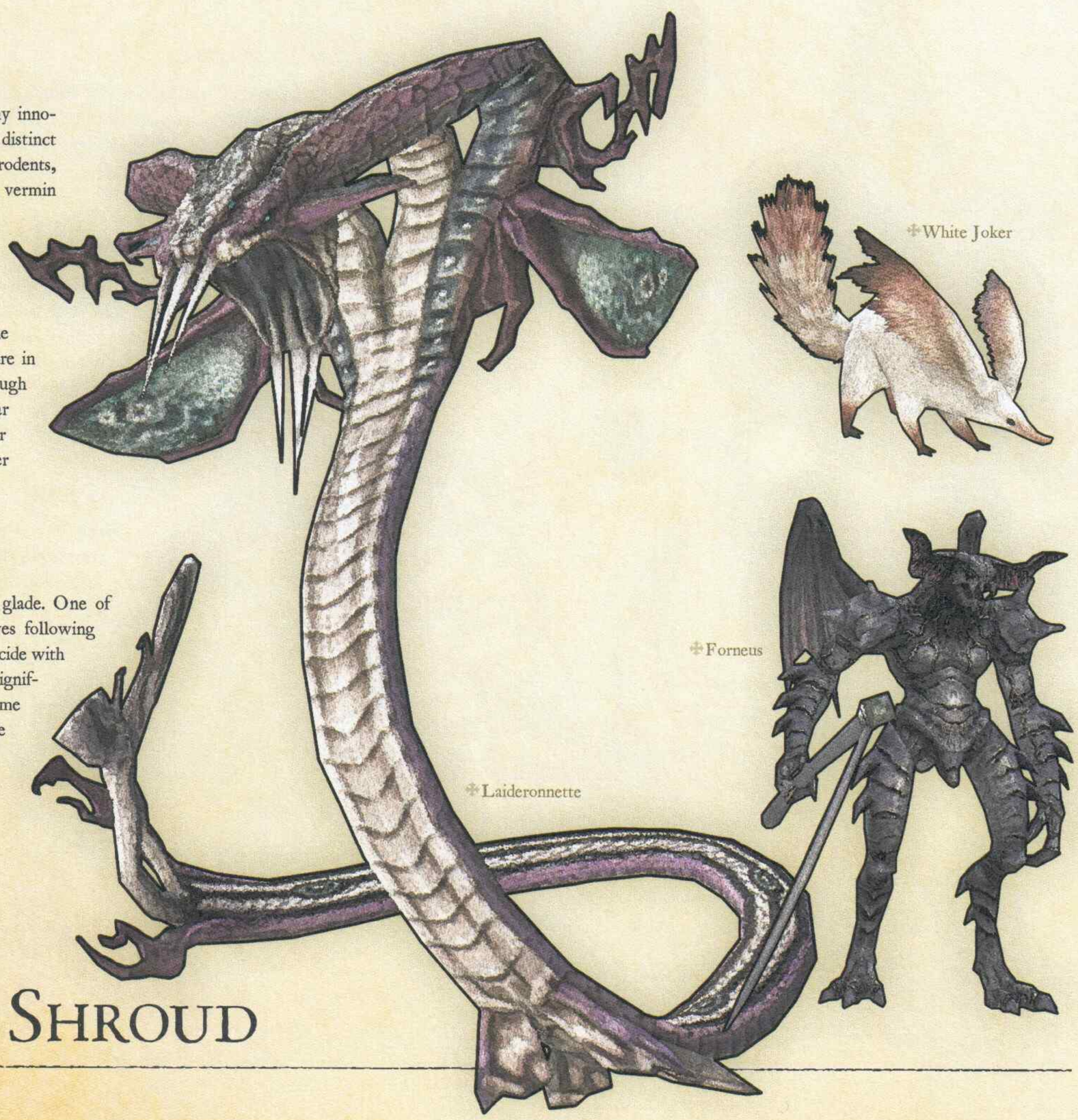
White Joker—so called because of many innocents fatally charmed by this squirrel's distinct white coat. Thanks to predation by other rodents, only the fittest and most vicious of the vermin survive to adulthood.

RANK A Forneus

While long believed to be naught but the stuff of fear-babes, sightings of the creature in the Twelveswood have been many though apocryphal. This includes a particular encounter at the notorious Haukke Manor where the dark demon's wanton slaughter painted the spring leaves red.

RANK S Laideronnette

Laideronnette, the red serpent of the glade. One of many monstrosities to manifest themselves following the Calamity, Laideronnette's attacks coincide with rainfall, a fact which demonologists deem significant. Most experts agree that the loathsome serpent is the residuum of Laideronnette the wainwright's red-haired daughter, who was orphaned in the Calamity and fell into grief both bitter and formless, given to shrieking that all the world should weep with her.



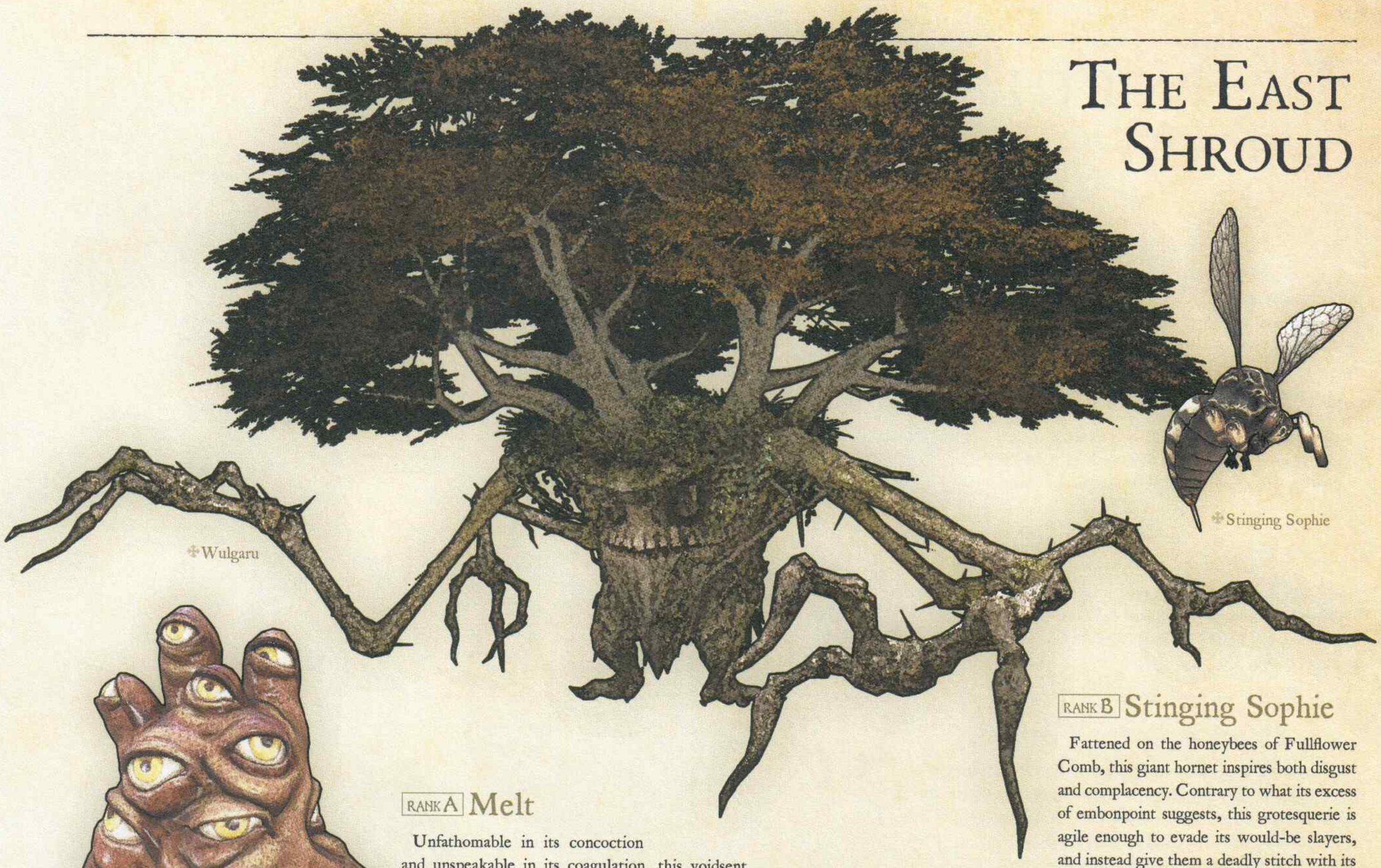
White Joker

Forneus

Laideronnette

The Central Shroud

The East Shroud



✠Wulgaru

✠Stinging Sophie

✠Melt

RANK A Melt

Unfathomable in its concoction and unspeakable in its coagulation, this voidsent has its origins in a sylph's jest. Gaze overlong at its sucking tumescence and something inside you will die...or at least put one off flummery for good.

RANK B Stinging Sophie

Fattened on the honeybees of Fullflower Comb, this giant hornet inspires both disgust and complacency. Contrary to what its excess of embonpoint suggests, this grotesquerie is agile enough to evade its would-be slayers, and instead give them a deadly stitch with its needle-sharp stinger.

RANK S Wulgaru

The false tree. Not a few poachers have vanished after being bound overnight to this vampiric sentinel by unsuspecting Wood Wailers. The towering seedkin is also drawn by noise and commotion, breaking its arboreal disguise to feast on the blood of its favorite prey.

✠Monarch Ogrefly

✠Ghede Ti Malice

✠Mindflayer

RANK B Monarch Ogrefly

The dread vilekin of the Lost City of Amdapor—the barrier that sealed in their infestation was considered sound. Yet even the Gods' Quiver could not stop the monstrous pests from escaping with their deadly taint of mold and burrs.

RANK A Ghede Ti Malice

First among gremlins in saltiness of speech, Ghede Ti Malice finally lost its place in Amdapor after one too many contumelies resulted in a falling out with its gremlin companions, proving thin skin and big mouths make for an uneasy combination.

RANK S Mindflayer

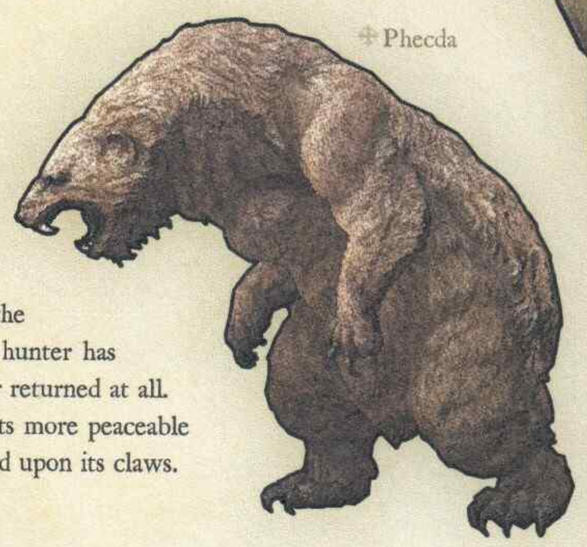
Mindflayers are major voidsents notable for their dealings with the remnants of the Lambs of Dalamud in the Black Shroud. Of the twelve tiers of the voidsent hierarchy put forth by scholars, mindflayers fall into the fifth. They have a grisly penchant for sucking out the brains of men, their favored prey. Most rumors are to be dismissed out of hand, yet this is not one of them. Moonless nights are when their rites grow the foulest. Only death and decay can chisel for them a foothold in this world. Hunters should take care to walk with Menphina, lest they become the hunted.

The South Shroud

The North Shroud

RANK B Phecda

A bear of unusual size from the distant heights of Abalathia's Spine, Phecda's southward migration has not been a happy one for the Black Shroud. Its uncouth appetite has emptied whole areas of the forest of edibles and game, and no hunter has returned with evidence of a cull—or returned at all. Phecda may be distinguished from its more peaceable cousins by the constant slick of blood upon its claws.



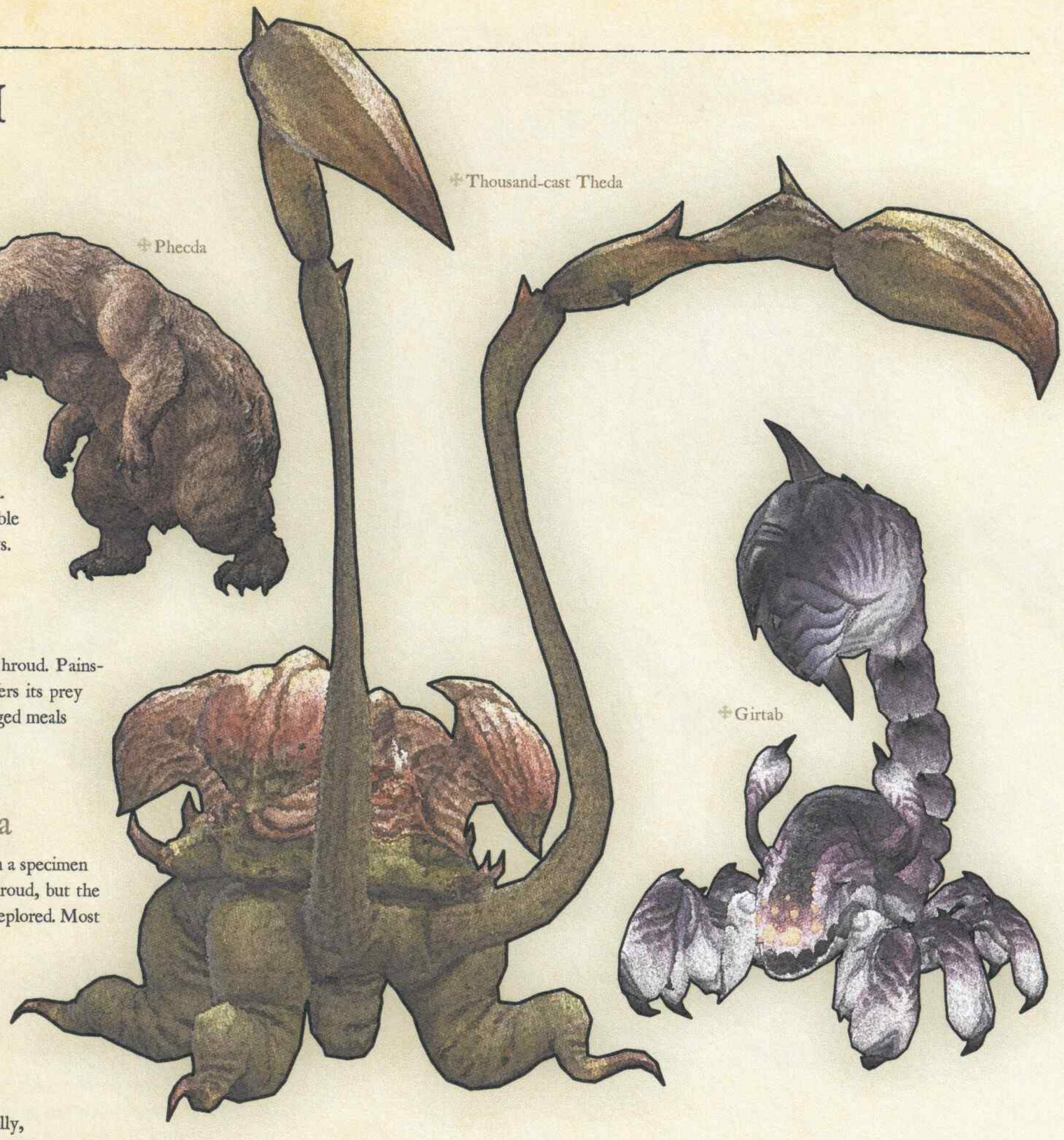
Phecda

RANK A Girtab

Mightiest among mites that ravage the North Shroud. Painstaking field observations have revealed Girtab prefers its prey fresh, and keeps a living larder of two- and four-legged meals artfully held fast in a web.

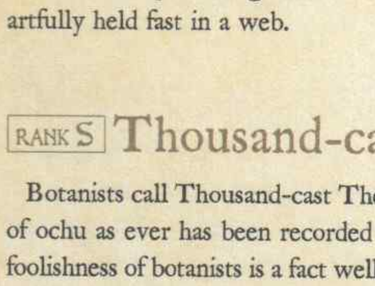
RANK S Thousand-cast Theda

Botanists call Thousand-cast Theda as well grown a specimen of ochu as ever has been recorded in the North Shroud, but the foolishness of botanists is a fact well known and oft deplored. Most species of this carnivorous family of bindweed use scent to lure their insect prey. Theda, however, is a plant notably lacking in patience and has evolved tentacle-like vines to pluck fish from water, and grows outsized on its rich meals. Along with the fisherfolk of the Shroud, Thousand-cast Theda is the main predator of venomous stingrays. Theda's other favored prey is, coincidentally, the fisherfolk of the Shroud. Hunters suspect a connection, but the foolishness of hunters is also a fact well known.

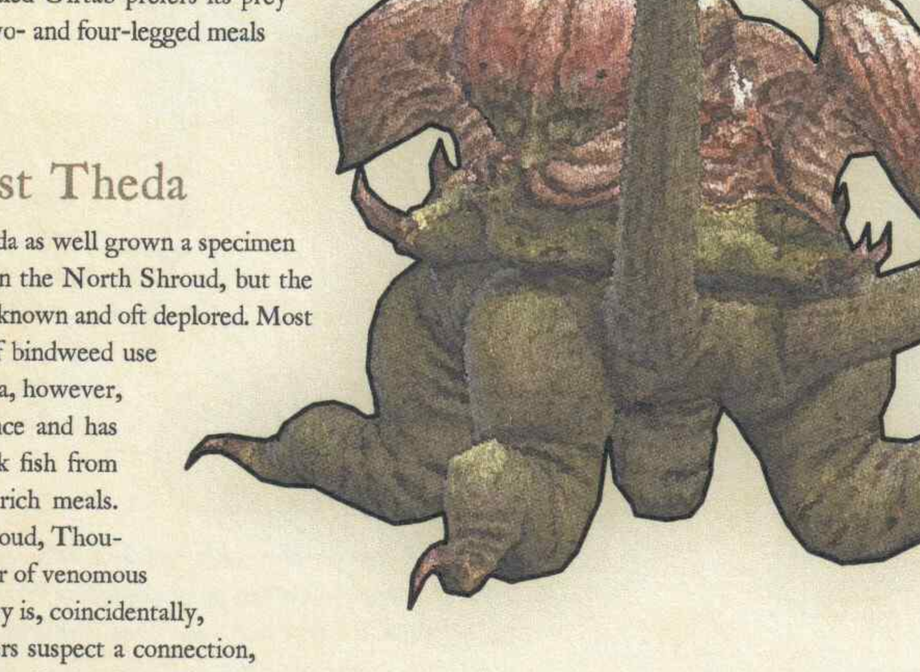


Thousand-cast Theda

Girtab



Sewer Syrup



Alectryon

RANK B Sewer Syrup

Born in the full foulness of the effluent passed by Amajina & Sons' Copperbell Mines, the voidsent Sewer Syrup was so named by the less imaginative among even the fume-addled unfortunates that work the recently expanded mine. Containment attempts by the Stone Torches were foiled by the voidsent's acrid stink. So powerful was the stench that it laid low many of the militiamen, and others still weep blood-tinged tears.

RANK A Alectryon

It is known that ziz hunt in pairs: the driver maneuvers the prey toward the ambusher, and both eat well that day. The elders say Alectryon never knew his place, and correct they were proven when his ambusher was found dead. The latter had starved while the self-styled lone hunter took the game by and for himself, leaving nary a gristle for the other.

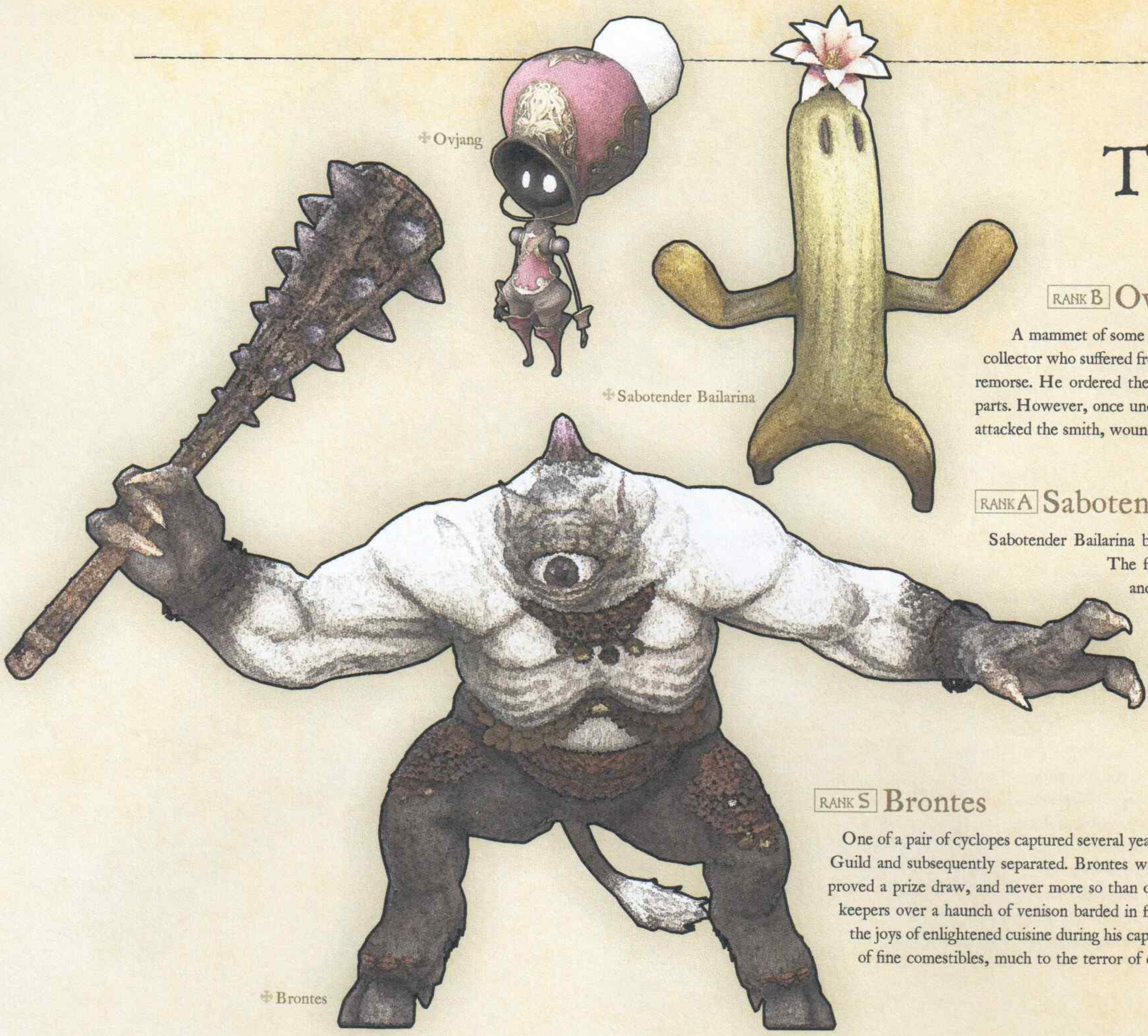
RANK S Zona Seeker

Few have seen Zona Seeker, such is the altitude it keeps in its deadly flight. Its elusiveness would trouble none but the most ardent scholars of airborne monstrosities, were it not for the many airships of High-wind Skyways lost to Zona Seeker's attacks. Flashes of light are known to draw it from the lofty heights of its demesne, or so claim those unfortunate enough to don pauldrons of bronze.

Zona Seeker

Western Thanalan

Central Thanalan



✢Ovjang

✢Sabotender Bailarina

✢Brontes

RANK B Ovjang

A mammet of some antiquity, last in possession of a wealthy collector who suffered from a particularly virulent case of buyer's remorse. He ordered the mammet disassembled and sold off for parts. However, once under the chisel, the mammet came to and attacked the smith, wounding her sorely before making its escape.

RANK A Sabotender Bailarina

Sabotender Bailarina blooms but once every two score years. The flower is remarkable less for its appearance, which is pedestrian enough, and more for its fragrance. The scent has been described by naturalists as an olfactory equivalent of fingernails on slate, and sends sabotenders into violent frenzy. Whether the effect arises from discomfort or lust is unknown.

RANK S Brontes

One of a pair of cyclopes captured several years ago on Vylbrand by the Adventurers' Guild and subsequently separated. Brontes was sold to an Ul'dahn circus, where he proved a prize draw, and never more so than on his last day, when he slew two of his keepers over a haunch of venison barded in flare fat before escaping. Having learned the joys of enlightened cuisine during his captivity, the cyclops is drawn by the aroma of fine comestibles, much to the terror of culinarians.

RANK B Gatling

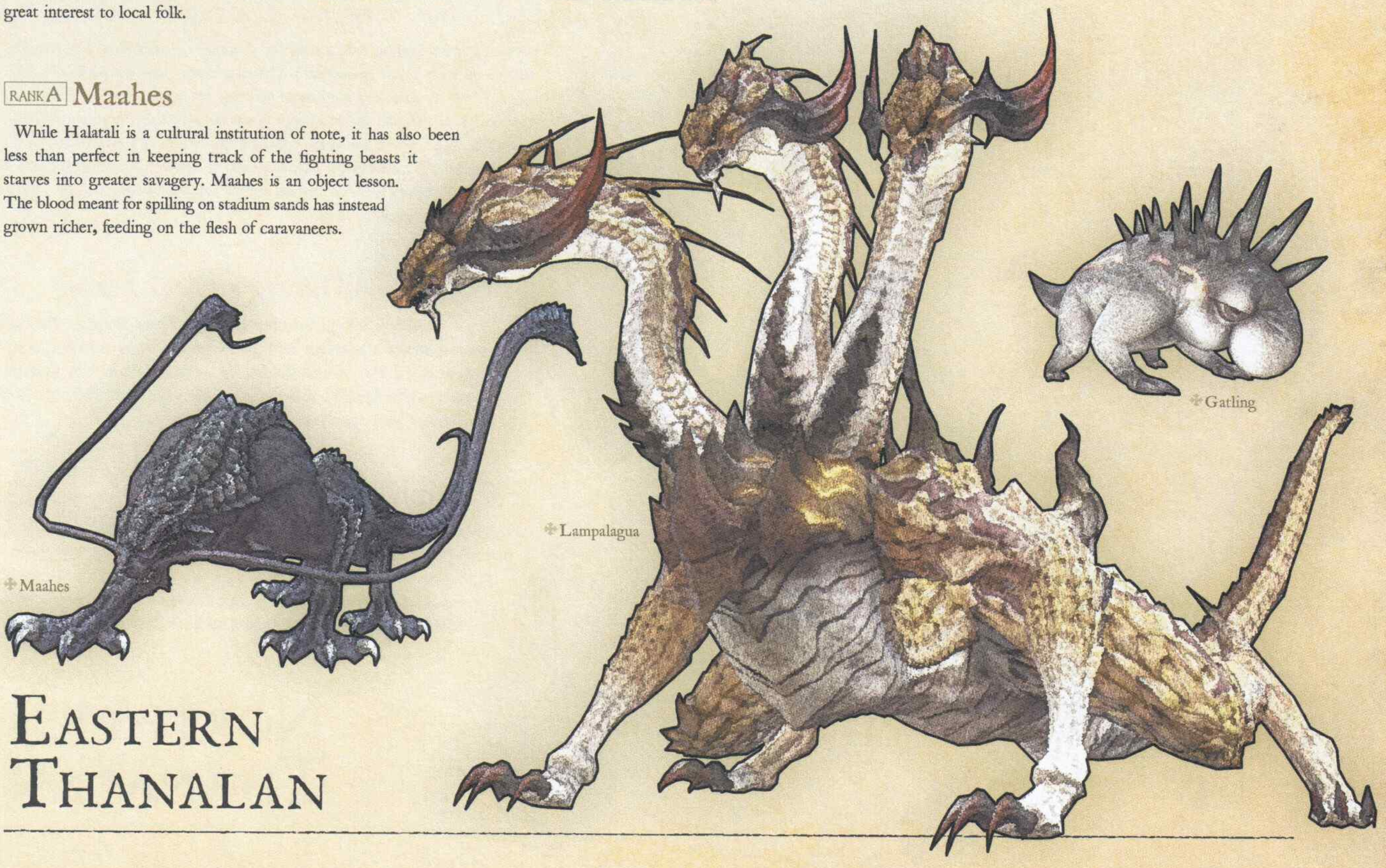
A hedgemole of exceptionally bad temper who makes free with the lichyard of the Church of Saint Adama Landama. He has been thus dubbed for taking up residence in the tomb of Gatling the Alchemical Smith. If the creature has a true name, it remains unknown and of no great interest to local folk.

RANK S Lampalagua

A dragon of many heads, cage-born and stadium-bred. His escape en route to the Coliseum was a major embarrassment for his handlers, or more precisely, to their heirs. Each head having been blooded as a hatchling, Lampalagua is exceptionally barbarous and exquisitely attuned to the bloodlust of the crowd. Lacking a conventional audience in the wilds of eastern Thanalan, Lampalagua has instead taken to appearing wherever violent business is afoot.

RANK A Maahes

While Halatali is a cultural institution of note, it has also been less than perfect in keeping track of the fighting beasts it starves into greater savagery. Maahes is an object lesson. The blood meant for spilling on stadium sands has instead grown richer, feeding on the flesh of caravaneers.



✢Gatling

✢Maahes

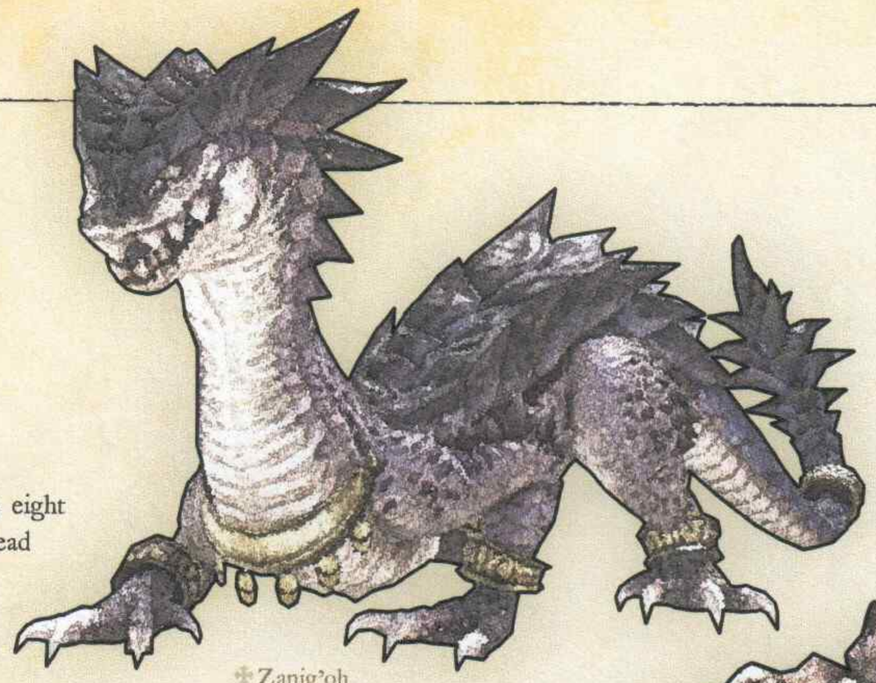
✢Lampalagua

Eastern Thanalan

Southern Thanalan

RANK B Albin the Ashen

When the Hyuran tribe came to Thanalan some eight hundred years ago, Albin the Ashen was at the head of one of the columns. Then-native Belah'dians rose against the invaders and prevailed, as history records. Albin was but one of many slain in the abortive conquest, yet his mortal coil still roams the land in search of vengeance.



✣Zanig'oh

✣Albin the Ashen

RANK A Zanig'oh

A drake altered by an Amalj'aa alchemist for no less a purpose than the conquest of Ul'dah. In addition to magic powers conferred by runes graven into its very flesh, the drake has a taste for melee combat, ably provoked into violence by inwardly spiked bangles affixed to all four limbs.

RANK S Nunyunuwi

The large population of golems in southern Thanalan is ascribed by mainstream historians to the mages of Belah'dia, who made the sturdy guardians for the protection of the Temple of Qarn. Among these sad remnants of a civilization lost to time, Nunyunuwi stands out for his exceptional size and stealth. At rest, he vanishes into the landscape of tors and boulders. Only an outbreak of sizable chaos and bloodshed will rouse the stone soldier to his ancient duty: to fight to the death.

✣Dalvag's Final Flame

RANK B Flame Sergeant Dalvag

Flame Sergeant Dalvag was among the thousands of defenders who met the Garlean invasion force in northern Thanalan soon after the Calamity. His company was ill placed to hold their position, yet given strict orders not to retreat. Many fell, and suffered much in the falling. Multiple witnesses attest that Dalvag was the last of the company and fought as a man possessed till the end, the names of the dead tumbling in hoarse barks through cracked lips. Scholars theorize that his mortal remains are animated by a thirst for vengeance alone.

✣Flame Sergeant Dalvag

RANK A Dalvag's Final Flame

Much is told of the corpse-soldier, Flame Sergeant Dalvag, yet mainstream scholarship has lagged woefully on the matter of what became of the rest of him. Efforts by hunter-scholars with intimate knowledge of northern Thanalan have resulted in persuasive identification of a malevolent local demon as the late sergeant's spirit.

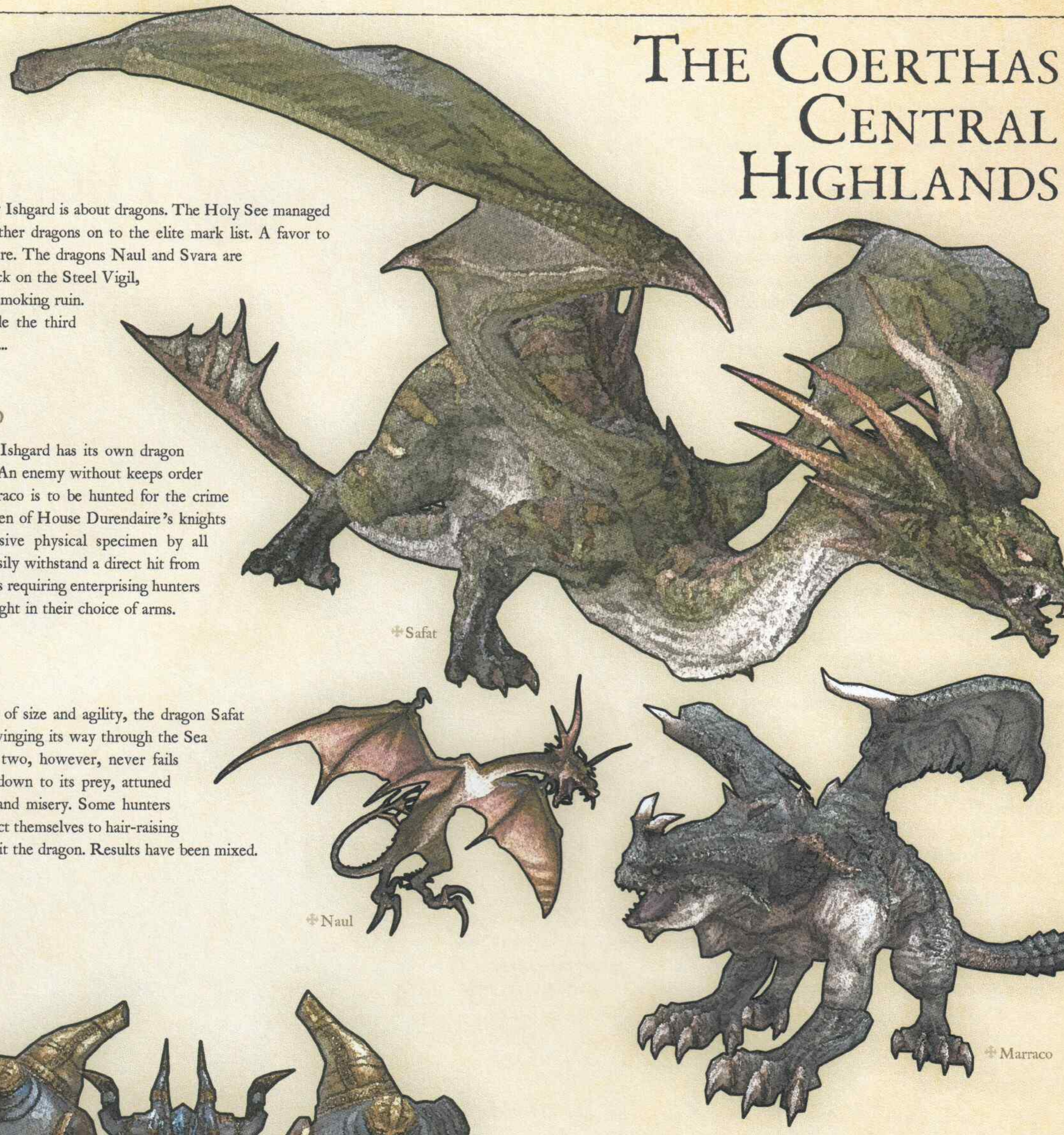
RANK S Minhocao

Sightings of Minhocao have long been reported near deposits and mines, particularly those that hold quantities of ceruleum. Alchemically similar to the sandworms' foremilk, the catalyst is a food source for the great worms. However, any attempt to lure Minhocao to the surface with the use of edible bait would necessitate very large quantities of food.

✣Minhocao

Northern Thanalan

The Coerthas Central Highlands



✙Safat

✙Naul

✙Marraco

RANK B Naul

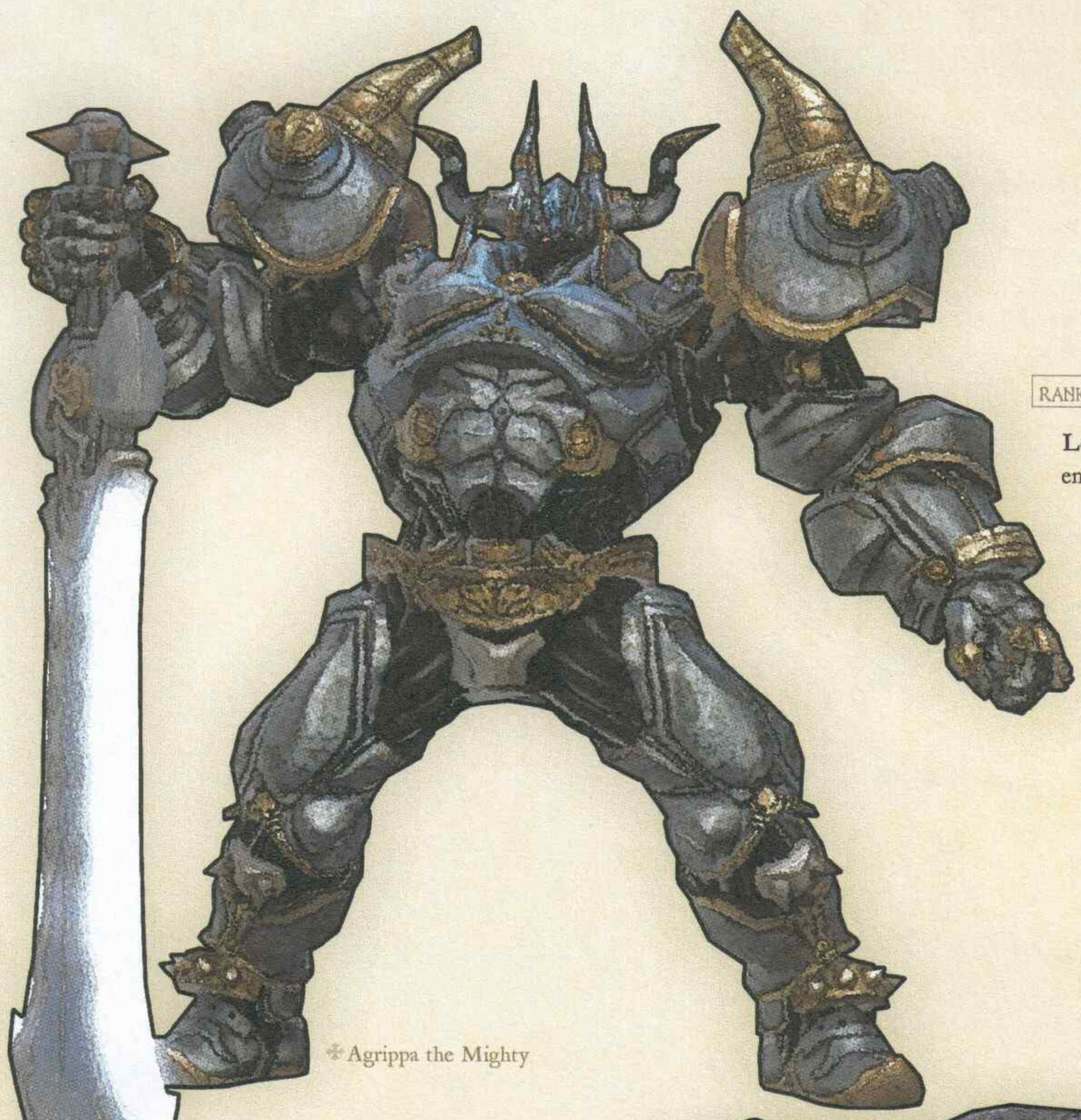
Ah, yes. You know how Ishgard is about dragons. The Holy See managed to get Naul and a few other dragons on to the elite mark list. A favor to be repaid in kind, I'm sure. The dragons Naul and Svara are best known for their attack on the Steel Vigil, which left the fortress a smoking ruin. Notable casualties include the third son of House Haillenarte...

RANK A Marraco

Every High House of Ishgard has its own dragon in a bonnet, don't they? An enemy without keeps order within. The dragon Marraco is to be hunted for the crime of mistaking almost a dozen of House Durendaire's knights for kindling. An impressive physical specimen by all accounts, Marraco can easily withstand a direct hit from dragonslayer cannons, thus requiring enterprising hunters to exercise some forethought in their choice of arms.

RANK S Safat

A winning combination of size and agility, the dragon Safat spends much of its time winging its way through the Sea of Clouds. A scream or two, however, never fails to bring Safat streaking down to its prey, attuned as the beast is to terror and misery. Some hunters have been known to subject themselves to hair-raising experiences in order to bait the dragon. Results have been mixed.



✙Agrippa the Mighty

RANK B The Leech King

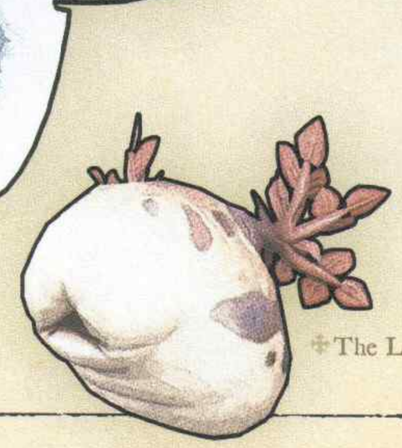
Leech King of Silvertear Falls, so dubbed by the Sons of Saint Coinach for its enormous size rather than any perceived system of sovereignty. Those who make mock of its grossness soon repent, for the Leech King is nimble where a meal of blood is concerned.

RANK A Kurrea

A particularly savage specimen of the unnatural creatures that inhabit both water and land, Kurrea was once a mere nuisance known for purloining game brought down by hunters. Amphibious beasts having an ingrained tendency to have ideas above their station, Kurrea soon took to attacking and feeding on the hunters. The flaccid, nerveless quality of its skin makes it proof against all but the most powerful thrusts of the blade.

RANK S Agrippa the Mighty

This magitek colossus is the newest of its kind and appears to have been designed as an anti-adventurer countermeasure. While the name is believed to be a tribute to an actual Garlean, no record of a likely honoree has been found. Though, to hear from the scores of poor souls battered and beaten on their journeys through Mor Dhona, the metal-clad golem has made the name all its own.



✙The Leech King

✙Kurrea

Mor Dhona

The Coerthas Western Highlands

RANK B Kreutzet

At first sight one might think the feathered archaeornis were birds, but they're actually a primitive species of scalekin, closer to raptors than they are to chocobos. The only thing they definitely share with birds is their brains—that combination of mental weakness and physical strength makes them perfect thralls for the dragons, who use them to launch constant attacks on the Ishgardian forces. The knights are particularly wary of the one they call Kreutzet. He has such strength in those thighs of his, even the thickest snowdrift is not enough to slow him down. He races hither and thither across the fields of rime, tearing apart any outpost unlucky enough to stand in his way.

✣Kreutzet

RANK B Alteci

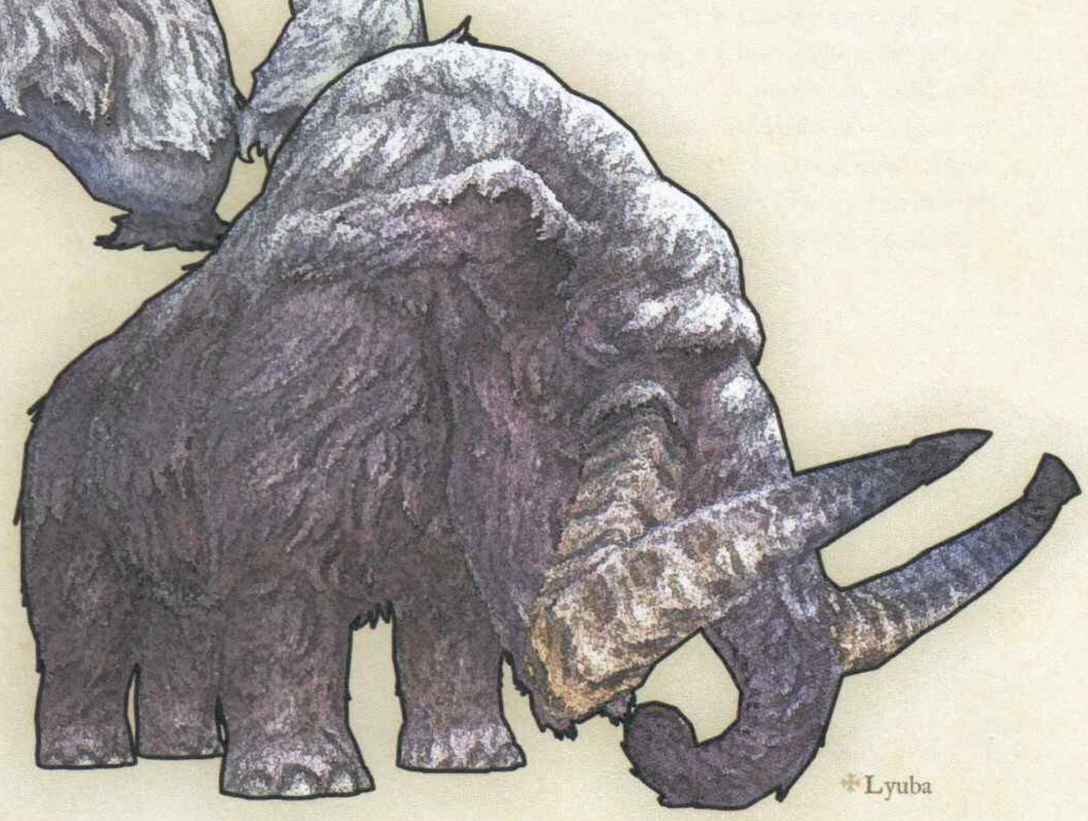
As the climate in the western highlands has grown colder, creatures that were never native to Coerthas have descended from the mountains to find food. The mylodons are one such species. Time was they made their home up in the far reaches of Abalathia's Spine, but ever since their hunting grounds were lost to the Calamity, they've found their way down here. They're fierce carnivores, who see steel-clad knights as nothing more than a packed lunch. Alteci's the worst of the lot—a mad mylodon who's been laying waste to the local forces. At the last count, more than a dozen noble lives have been lost to that monster.

✣Alteci

RANK A Mirka

Once every hundred thousand winters, a yeti is born with a horn atop its massy head that is imbued with an extraordinary magical power. When the creature reaches maturity, it sends out a clarion call to the rest of the yetis that unites them under the horned one's rule. Or so the old wives' tale goes. The problem is, there might just be some truth in it. The Convictors believe they may have sighted such a "horned one." The first thing they did was to name her Mirka—the second, to slap a bounty on her head. The yetis are dangerous enough as it is, but if this beast lives to maturity and brings them together as a single force, they could be nigh on unstoppable.

✣Mirka



RANK A Lyuba

There was once a dragonslayer who was out hunting his prey on the frozen lake of Ashpool, when he made a surprising discovery. An enormous animal was frozen solid beneath the ice. Thinking he could use the deceased creature's meat to lure dragons into a trap, he lit a bonfire over the lake to melt its body free. A most ill-advised plan indeed... You see, the beast wasn't quite as dead as the knight first thought. Freed from its icy prison, it began to breathe once more, and lashed out at all around it with elemental fury. When the dragonslayer set out to hunt for dragons, I doubt he expected to meet his end at the point of a tusk.

✣Lyuba

RANK S Kaiser Behemoth

Adventurers have faced behemoths countless times, and have been meeting with more and more success of late. However, there is one among their number that has always made good its escape, even when gravely wounded by the swords and spells of myriad adventurers. Due to its giant size and superior strength, it has become known as the king of the behemoths. They say that this kaiser behemoth, whose body is crisscrossed with the scars of a thousand battles, seeks any opportunity to avenge itself on those who defeated its brothers.

✣Kaiser Behemoth

Senmurv

RANK S Senmurv

Griffins are half eagle, half lion, and all hunter. Just like a chocobo trapper, they stalk their prey from the shadows—or in their case the clouds—waiting for the perfect time to strike. The chocobo hunters of Tailfeather have a certain credo about picking when to spring the trap—"hunt the hunter," they say. Whatever the quarry, one stands a better chance of catching it unawares if it is busy trying to catch its own prey. It seems this is a motto Senmurv's taken to heart, as whenever a group of hungry beasts heads out on the hunt, the king of the griffins will swoop down from the sky and carry off as many as his beak will hold.

Pylraster

RANK A Pylraster

It might not seem as much at first glance, but Sohm Al is an active volcano. Many have heard tell that there is a vast cave in the foothills that goes deep into the mountain's heart, a place filled with fire and brimstone like a scene out of the seventh hell. Of course, the blistering heat makes it a paradise for cold-blooded scalekin. By all accounts there is a whole horde of the creatures down there in the deep—primitive lizards in thrall to the dragons. And amongst them, there crawls a horror some say is almost as dangerous as the dragons themselves—an ancient archaeosaur by the name of Pylraster.

Lord of the Wyverns

RANK A Lord of the Wyverns

They say even a scholar cannot tell one dragonling from the next, but as the creatures mature, their differences become more pronounced. Take wyverns, for example—they start off like any other dragon, but as they age, their wings grow larger and more powerful, until before long, they find little reason to return to the ground. They prove no match for their four-legged cousins when it comes to brute strength, but what they lack in muscle, they make up for in mobility. A murder of the fiends can easily bring down an airship if they set their minds to it. And one might surmise that their speed would drop off with age, but such is not the case. The eldest of their number, the Lord of the Wyverns, can twist and turn like no other, ducking and diving out the way of dragonslayer shells. It is a small wonder many of the realm's airship captains want the dastard dead.

RANK B Gnath Cometdrone

Time was the Gnath kept to themselves, too wary of the dragons to ever stray far from their own lands. They once only used their muskets to hunt food, but of late, have begun turning their arms on anyone unlucky enough to stray into what they reckon to be "Gnath territory." Judging from the number of chocobo hunters returning to Tailfeather with backs full of buckshot, it seems that includes any place in the range of their boomsticks.

RANK B Thextera

Amongst the bandersnatches of the northern forelands, there is one causing Tailfeather's hunters such distress, they have bound together to place a bounty on its head. Instead of tracking chocobos, which most of its ilk are wont to do, Thextera has taken to procuring its meals from the trade caravans plying the trail betwixt Tailfeather and Ishgard. Those caravans bring in the supplies the hunters need to survive, and carry back the chocobos the hunters catch to be sold at market. The beast has begun helping himself to a bit of both, and the drivers besides. If the caravans are Tailfeather's lifeblood, then Thextera's the knife in its neck.

Gnath Cometdrone

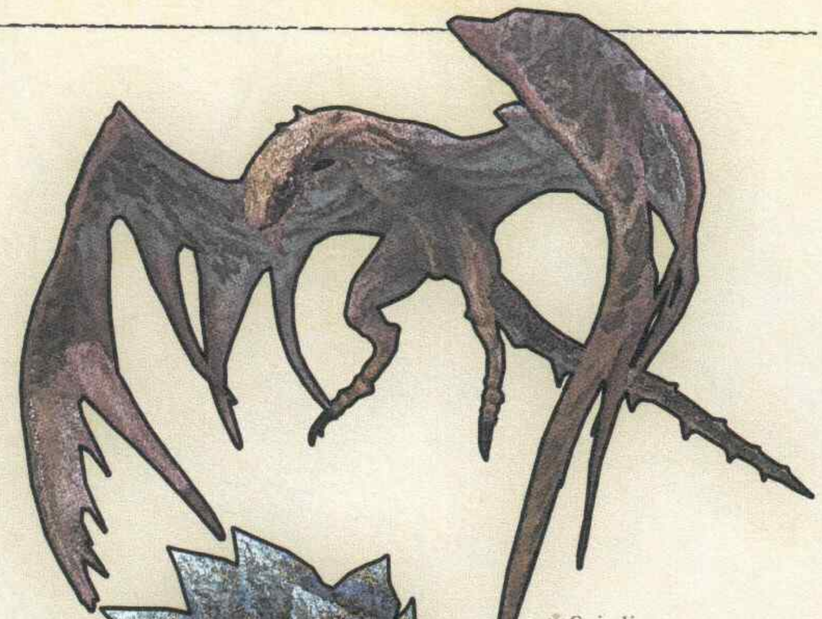
Thextera

The Dravanian Forelands

The Churning Mists

RANK B Scitalis

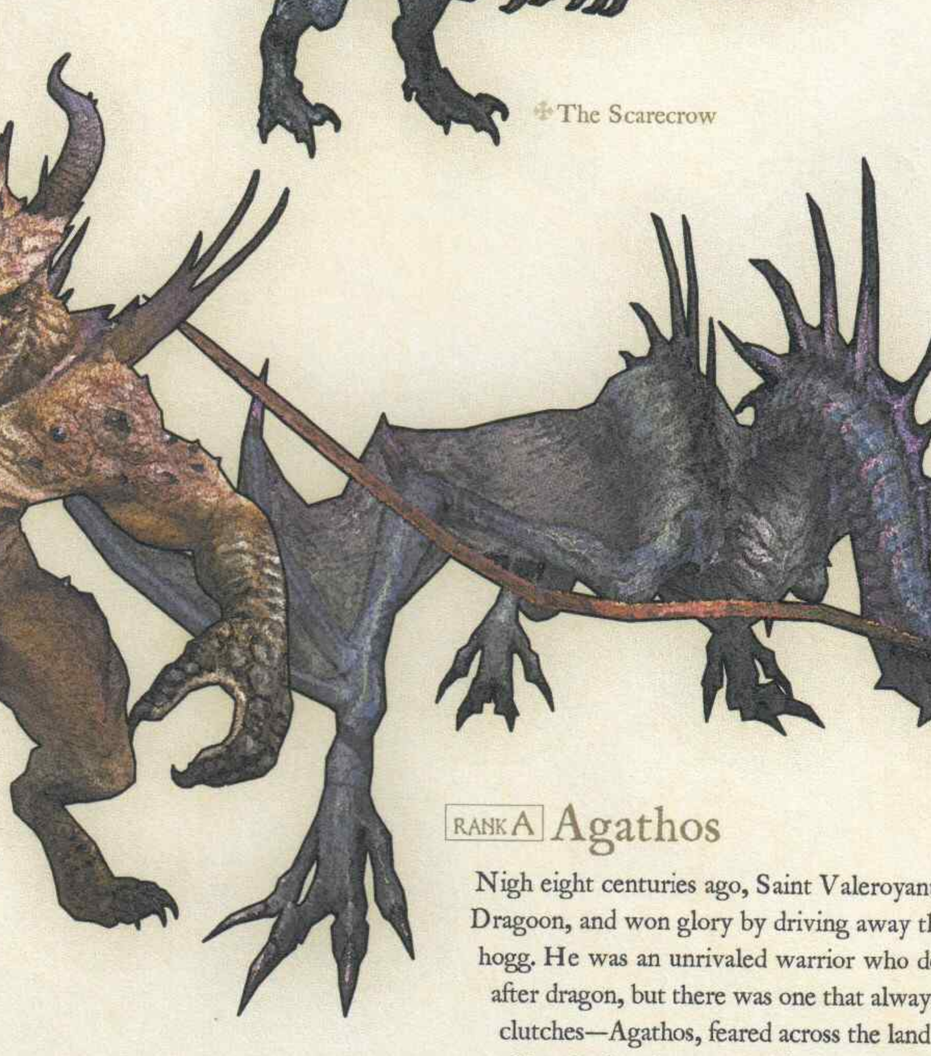
As wyverns grow, they progress through a number of developmental stages, their bodies becoming more and more streamlined with each change. In their final forms, even their horns drop off, leaving them with a sleek shape perfectly suited for flight. It is one such elder wyvern that has been marked for death by a certain nobleman. You should be able to spot this monster easily enough—its sleek, shining scales have earned it the name "Scitalis," after a legendary dragon with similarly lustrous skin.



✠Scitalis

RANK B The Scarecrow

Not long ago, a party of Temple Knights headed into the foothills of Sohm Al to spy on the dragons' activities. However, a few days into their mission, they disappeared without a trace. A rescue party was dispatched to find the missing knights, and find them it did. They discovered their missing comrades standing over the body of a vinegaroon—a fearsome scalekin in thrall to the dragons. But as they approached, the monster suddenly rose to its feet and sprang at the would-be rescuers, slaying several before they could ready themselves. The Temple Knights were all dead—the Scarecrow had propped up their corpses to lure their rescuers into a trap. After taking its toll on the rescue party, the monster fled up the slopes of Sohm Al, and naught has been seen of it since. We believe it may yet be hiding in the Churning Mists.



✠The Scarecrow

RANK A Bune

Most heretics are drawn from common stock, but there are more than a few nobles among them, too. One such fellow was the husband of a lady Temple Knight—unbeknownst to her, he abused his position to steal the order's secrets and feed them to the dragons. For years the nobleman passed sensitive information to the Horde, until the day he grew weary of his double life and supped from the scaly cup, transforming himself into a monstrous scalekin. His plan was simple—to slaughter his family, feign his own death, and join with the dragons. Thanks to the timely intervention of the order, the former parts of his plan were foiled, but the beast broke their cordon and succeeded in fleeing to Dravania. It was one of the Temple Knights who put the bounty on his head—the very lady who was once his wife.

✠Bune

✠Agathos

RANK A Agathos

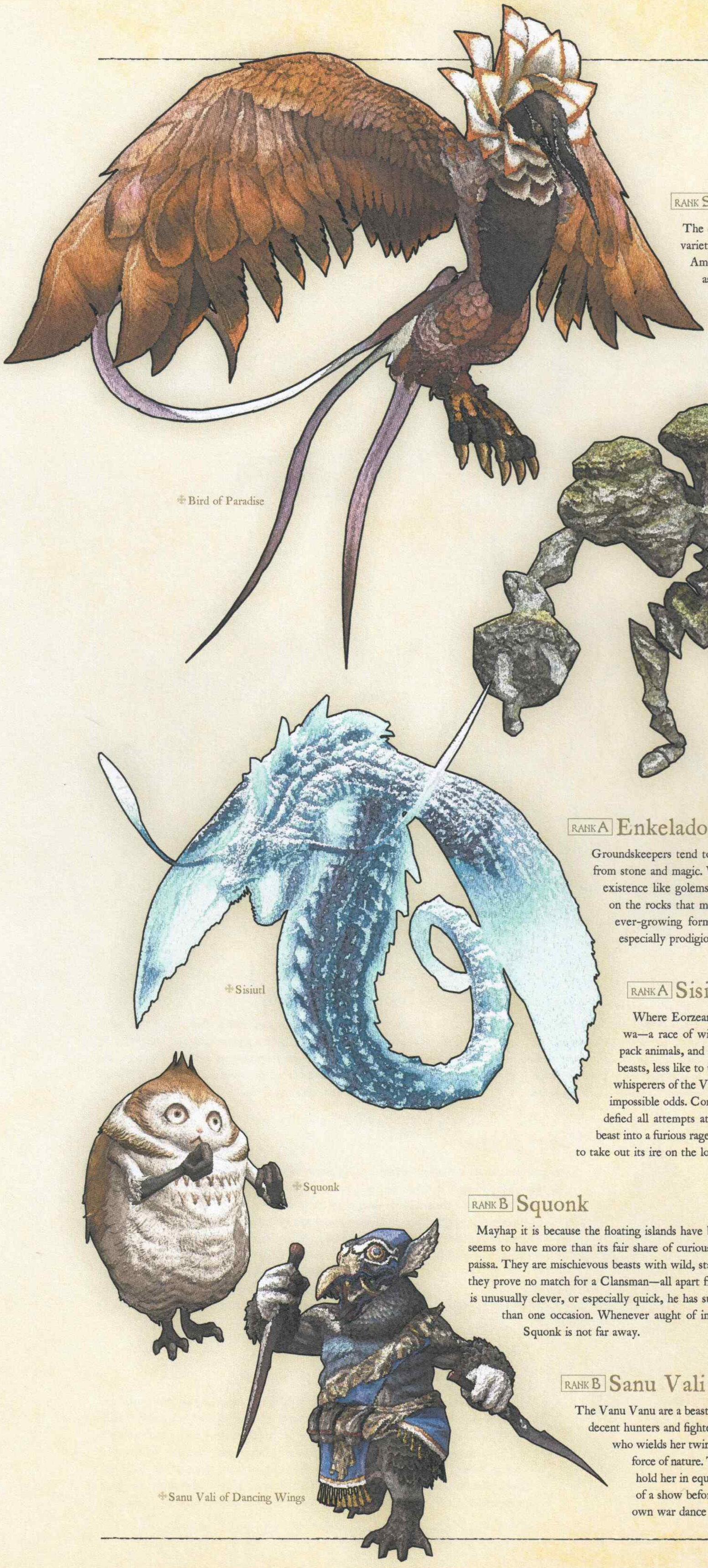
Nigh eight centuries ago, Saint Valeroyant served as an Azure Dragoon, and won glory by driving away the great wyrm Nidhogg. He was an unrivaled warrior who dealt death to dragon after dragon, but there was one that always managed to slip his clutches—Agathos, feared across the land as the Black Death. Naught has been seen of the creature since Valeroyant's passing, but in recent years, rumors have been spreading of a shadow of Agathos's size and shape appearing in the clouds above Dravania. Could this be our chance to bring Saint Valeroyant's legend to a close?

✠Gandarewa

RANK S Gandarewa

It is not only the dragons who have brought heretics into our midst. Five hundred years ago, another heretical sect gained traction among the smallfolk of Ishgard. The heathens adopted the customs of the Near East, bathing themselves in perfumes brewed from strange flowers and forging idols from rare metals that they used in their bizarre and unholy rites. Naturally, the Temple Knights were quick to clamp down on the sect's activities. Its leader, a peasant who styled himself the great guru Gandarewa, fled to the next holiest place he knew—the sacred mountain of Dravania. There he supped on the blood of a dragon, and was forever changed...

The Sea of Clouds



✣Bird of Paradise

✣Enkelados

✣Sisiutl

✣Squonk

✣Sanu Vali of Dancing Wings

RANK S Bird of Paradise

The cool air and gentle breezes of the Sea of Clouds attract a wide variety of cloudkin, from the scaled to the furred to the feathered. Among the latter, there is one as revered for its breathtaking beauty as it is feared for its insatiable thirst for blood—the fabled Bird of Paradise. There is nothing that it loves more than to feast on living flesh. The moment it hears the plaintive cries of a wounded animal, it will swoop down from the skies with talons bared, drool dripping from its beak. Something to bear in mind should you wish to hunt for the bird yourself.

RANK A Enkelados

Groundskeepers tend to be quarry right up a Clansman's alley—ten-fulm titans born from stone and magic. Whether they form naturally like sprites, or are magicked into existence like golems, it is not known. One thing is for certain, though—they feed on the rocks that make up these islands, and add the rubble they produce to their ever-growing forms. The one the knights call Enkelados appears to have an especially prodigious appetite.

RANK A Sisiutl

Where Eorzeans would employ a chocobo, the Vanu Vanu rely on the sanuwa—a race of winged scalekin native to the Sea of Clouds. They use them as pack animals, and as mounts for their cavalry. Wild sanuwa are fierce, independent beasts, less like to take a bit in their teeth than their captors' gizzards. The sanuwa whisperers of the Vanu Vanu work wonders to tame the creatures against seemingly impossible odds. Completely impossible, in some cases. The one they call Sisiutl has defied all attempts at domestication, the gentlest whisper driving the black-hearted beast into a furious rage. Not so long ago it broke free from its wranglers, and has begun to take out its ire on the local populace.

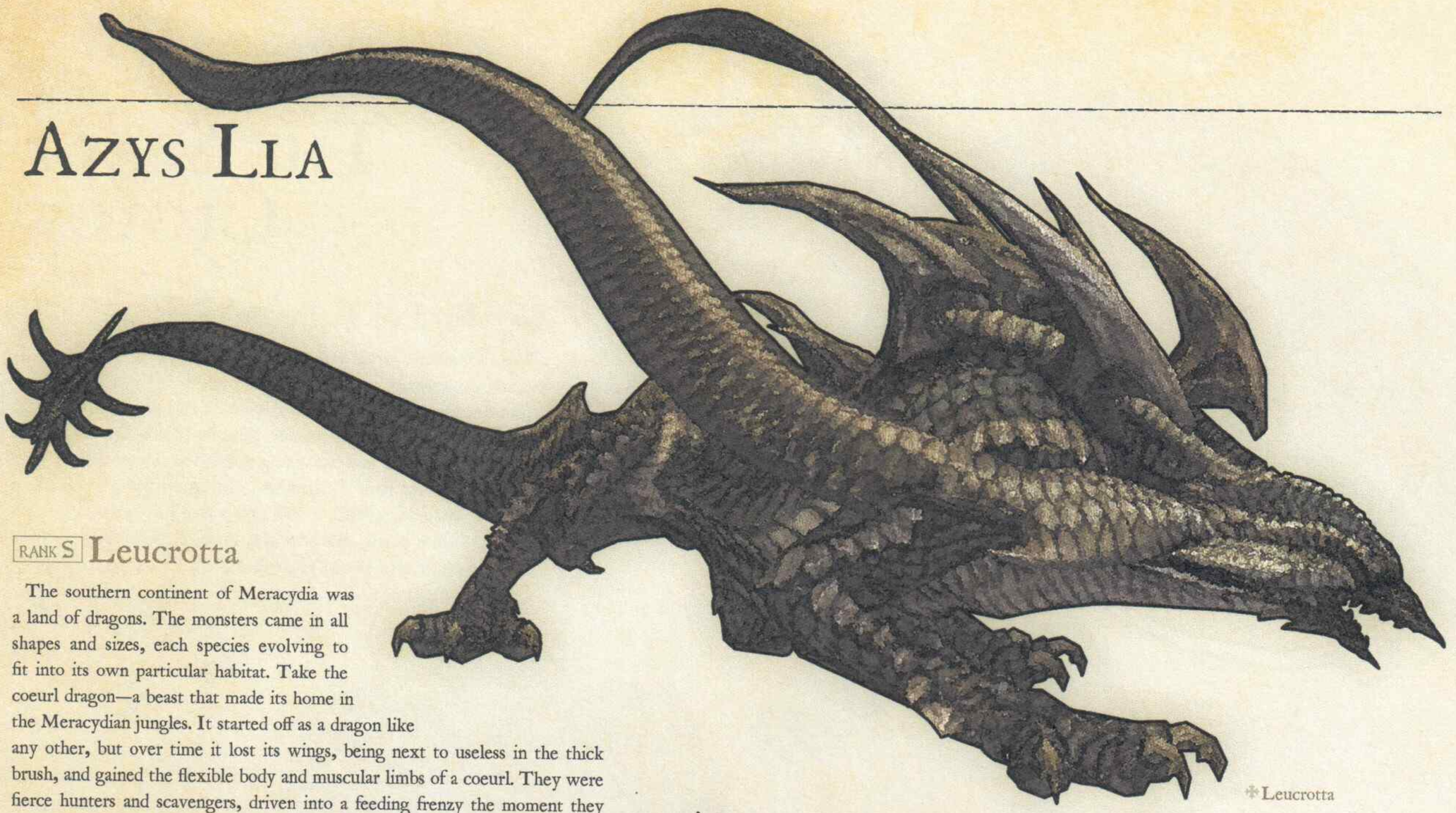
RANK B Squonk

Mayhap it is because the floating islands have been cut off from the world for so long, but the Sea of Clouds seems to have more than its fair share of curious creatures—and they don't come much more curious than the paissa. They are mischievous beasts with wild, staring eyes, who seem to be in a constant state of agitation. Still, they prove no match for a Clansman—all apart from their leader, the dreaded Squonk. Whether it is because he is unusually clever, or especially quick, he has succeeded in pulling the Rose Knights' breeches down on more than one occasion. Whenever aught of import goes missing from the Rosehouse, one can be sure that Squonk is not far away.

RANK B Sanu Vali of Dancing Wings

The Vanu Vanu are a beast tribe native to the Sea of Clouds, and they're not short of a few decent hunters and fighters. Sanu Vali's one of their best and brightest—a Vanu warrior who wields her twin blades to such devastating effect, her compatriots revere her as a force of nature. The Rose Knights who often come into conflict with the birdmen hold her in equal and opposite regard. The Vanu are wont to put on something of a show before they enter battle, and it's the graceful majesty of Sanu Vali's own war dance that has earned her the moniker "of Dancing Wings."

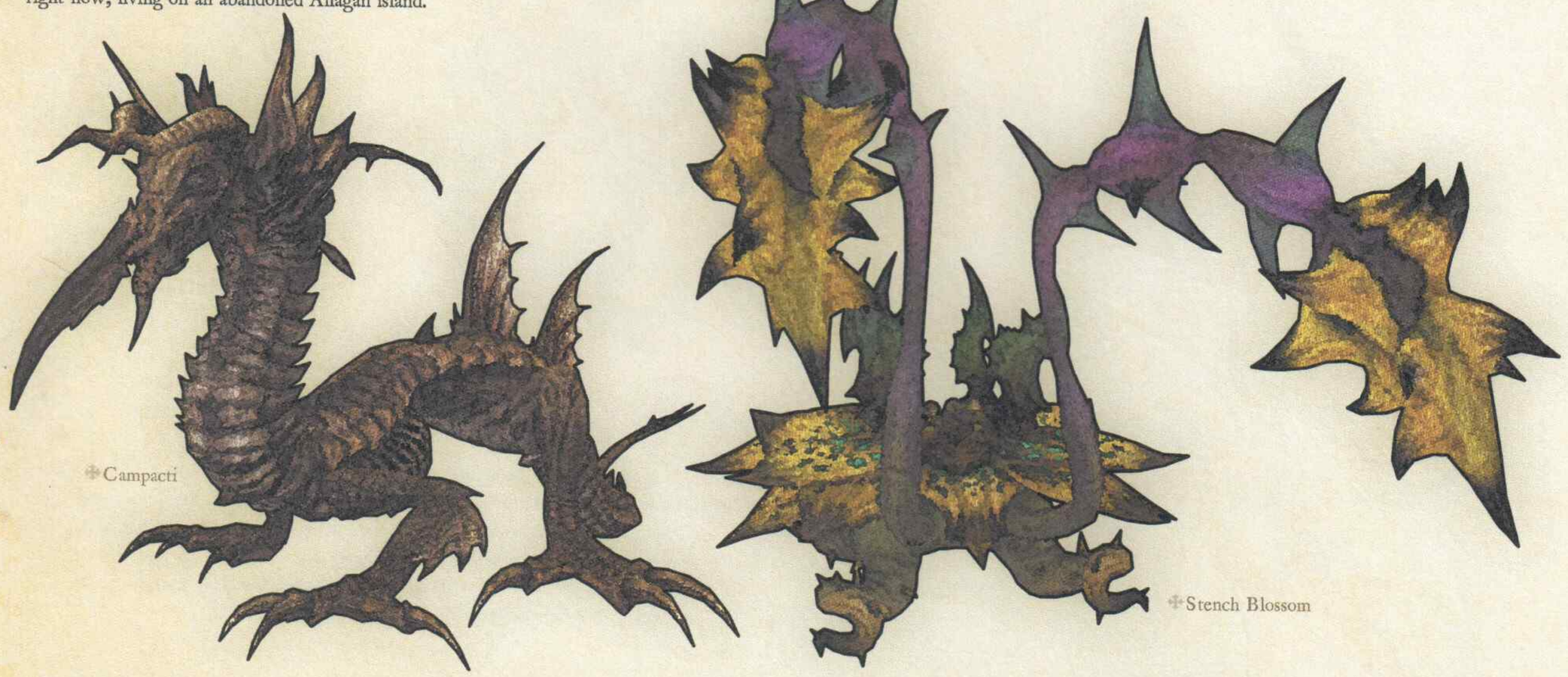
Azys Lla



✣Leucrotta

RANK S Leucrotta

The southern continent of Meracydia was a land of dragons. The monsters came in all shapes and sizes, each species evolving to fit into its own particular habitat. Take the coeurl dragon—a beast that made its home in the Meracydian jungles. It started off as a dragon like any other, but over time it lost its wings, being next to useless in the thick brush, and gained the flexible body and muscular limbs of a coeurl. They were fierce hunters and scavengers, driven into a feeding frenzy the moment they caught scent of beast blood. The merchant who posted the bill reckons one of these beasts, a coeurl dragon by the name of Leucrotta, is up in the clouds right now, living on an abandoned Allagan island.



✣Campacti

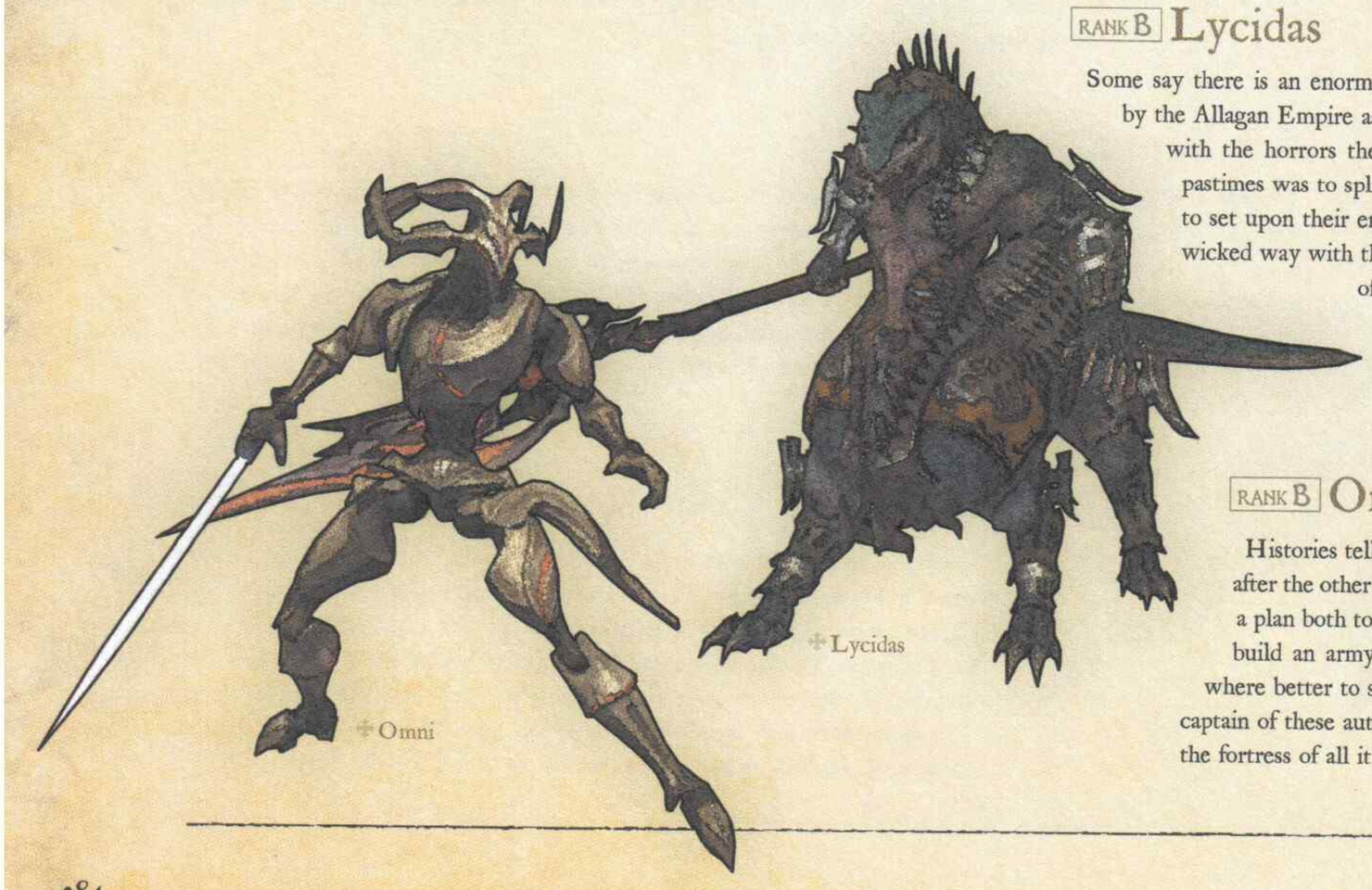
✣Stench Blossom

RANK A Campacti

As the sun set on the Allagan Empire, they made their last big land grab—they invaded the southern continent of Meracydia, capturing scores of dragons and subjecting them to barbarous procedures that bent the creatures to their will. Or so some believe. There may or may not be truth in these stories, but if the technology to control dragons really does exist, it is likely a fair few people in this world would gladly give much and more to learn the secret. "Campacti" is thought to be one such slave-dragon, and the price on her head—dead or alive—is high.

RANK A Stench Blossom

The stench blossom's a monstrous man-eating plant that's long been extinct in Eorzea, but some are on good authority that they still thrive on the Allagans' floating island. If those monstrosities really are up there, and their spores were ever blown down on the wind and take root in Eorzea again... Well, it does not bear thinking about.



✣Omni

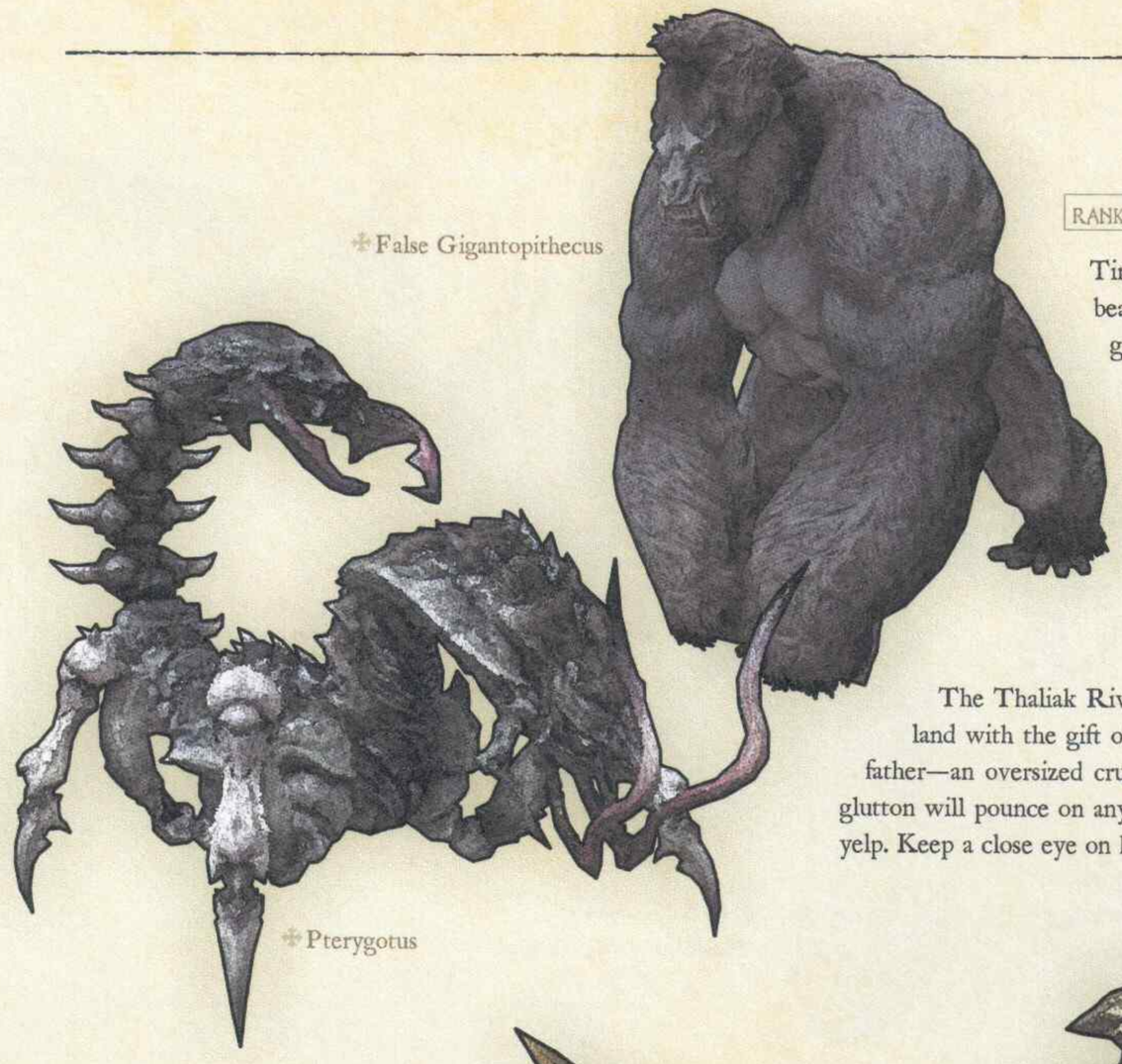
✣Lycidas

RANK B Lycidas

Some say there is an enormous man-made island somewhere in the Sea of Clouds. It was built by the Allagan Empire as a base for their bizarre experiments, and it's still up there, teeming with the horrors their unholy tamperings gave birth to. One of the Allagans' favorite pastimes was to splice bits of different monsters together, creating godsforsaken chimeras to set upon their enemies. But it wasn't just beasts they tampered with—they had their wicked way with the beastmen, too. This merchant claims to have found a record of one of these experiments—they took a lizardman from the southern shores of Aldenard and crossed it with a vicious scalekin from across the Sea of Ash. The abomination that resulted from this unhappy union they christened "Lycidas."

RANK B Omni

Histories tell that in the dying days of the Allagan Empire, uprisings occurred one after the other in every corner of their vast territory. The imperial army came up with a plan both to suppress these insurrections and stave off revolt from within—they'd build an army of automata that would never disobey their masters' orders. And where better to station these soldiers than their magical flying fortress? No doubt the captain of these automata, "Omni," would not take too kindly to adventurers stripping the fortress of all it's worth and selling the looted artifacts back on land for a pittance!



✣False Gigantopithecus

✣Pterygotus

RANK B False Gigantopithecus

Time and again, the residents of Idyllshire have come under attack from a huge, hairy beastkin—imagine if you crossed a Roegadyn with an opo-opo, and had it row a ten-tonze galley for a twelvemoon. Sharlayan annals were scoured for a record of such a monster, and there was found mention of the gigantopithecus, a fierce beast discovered in the tropical jungles of the Cieldalaes. It was brought here as a youngling by a Sharlayan scholar, who raised it in a specially constructed glasshouse in some vain attempt to research its ecology. But when the exodus came, the callow whelp didn't think of taking his pet with him.

RANK B Pterygotus

The Thaliak River is a shining symbol of the Dravanian hinterlands—the great mother who blesses the land with the gift of water. But where the gentle and generous mother brings life, the cruel and merciless father—an oversized crustacean who rules over the Thaliak with an iron claw—brings only death. The great glutton will pounce on anything that moves, and chop up his prey with his tail pincers faster than you can utter a yelp. Keep a close eye on his tail, or you shall be feeding the fish in bite-sized chunks.

✣Slipkinx Steeljoints

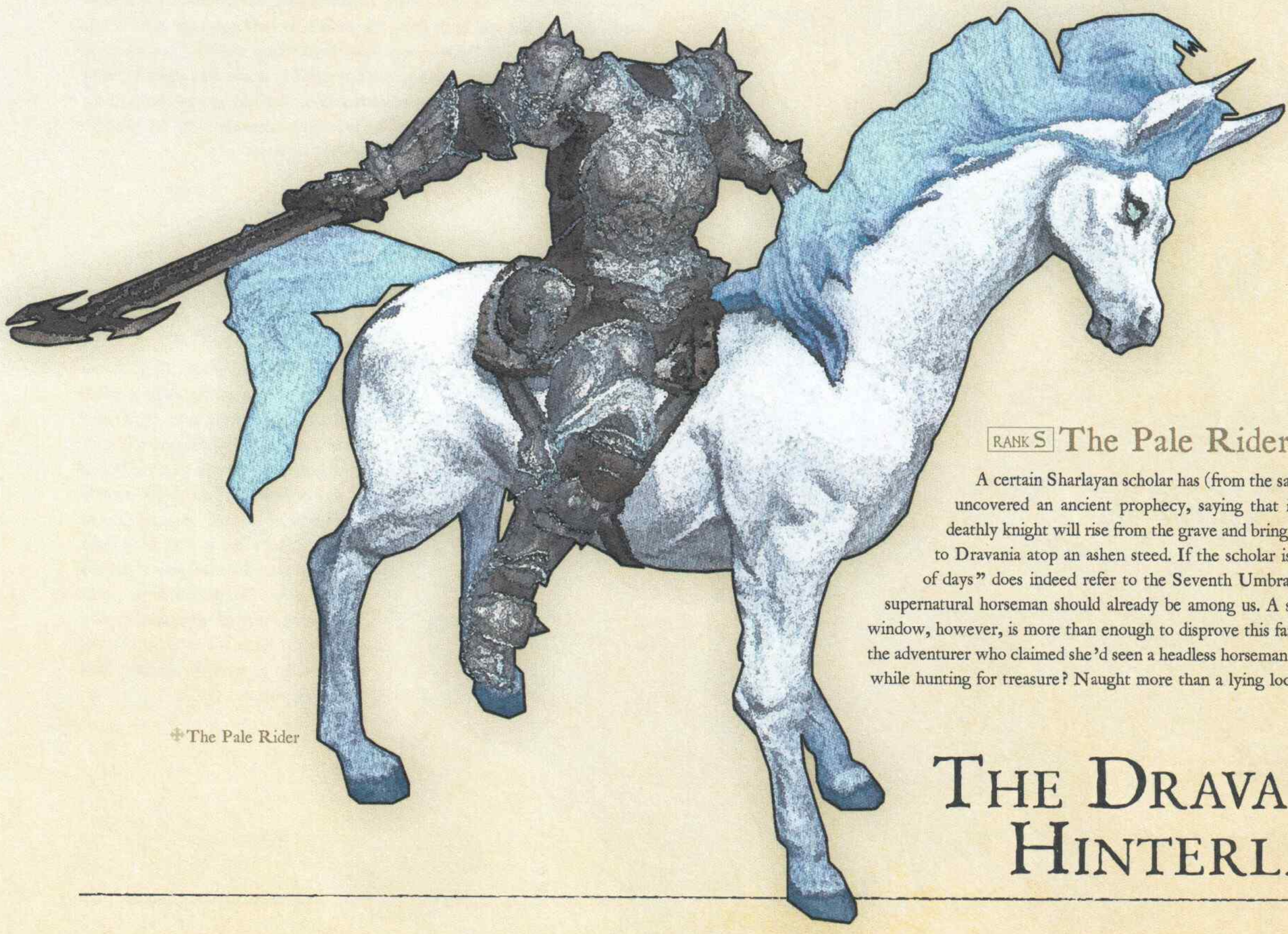
✣Stolas

RANK A Slipkinx Steeljoints

The Illuminati are a secretive fraternity of goblin scholars who are particularly active in this area, engaging in experiments that run the gamut from the unusual to the downright unsavory. Slipkinx Steeljoints's studies fall towards the latter end of the spectrum. He's a notorious scoundrel who thinks nothing of slaughtering innocents to test the effectiveness of his experimental weaponry. The brute dresses himself in a suit of mechanical armor that is nigh on impenetrable, and sets upon passersby with technologically enhanced gusto.

RANK A Stolas

Little is it known that the man who placed a bounty on Stolas's head was, in fact, a Sharlayan astrologian who lived in the Dravanian hinterlands before the exodus, conducting his scholarly experiments. In one such trial, he used his magicks to bind an owl to him as a familiar. The test succeeded, but by some quirk of fate, the owl gained a prodigious intelligence, outstripping even that of its master. But when the exodus came, the owl revolted. It attacked its master, stole a tome of forbidden knowledge, and escaped into the hinterlands.



✣The Pale Rider

RANK S The Pale Rider

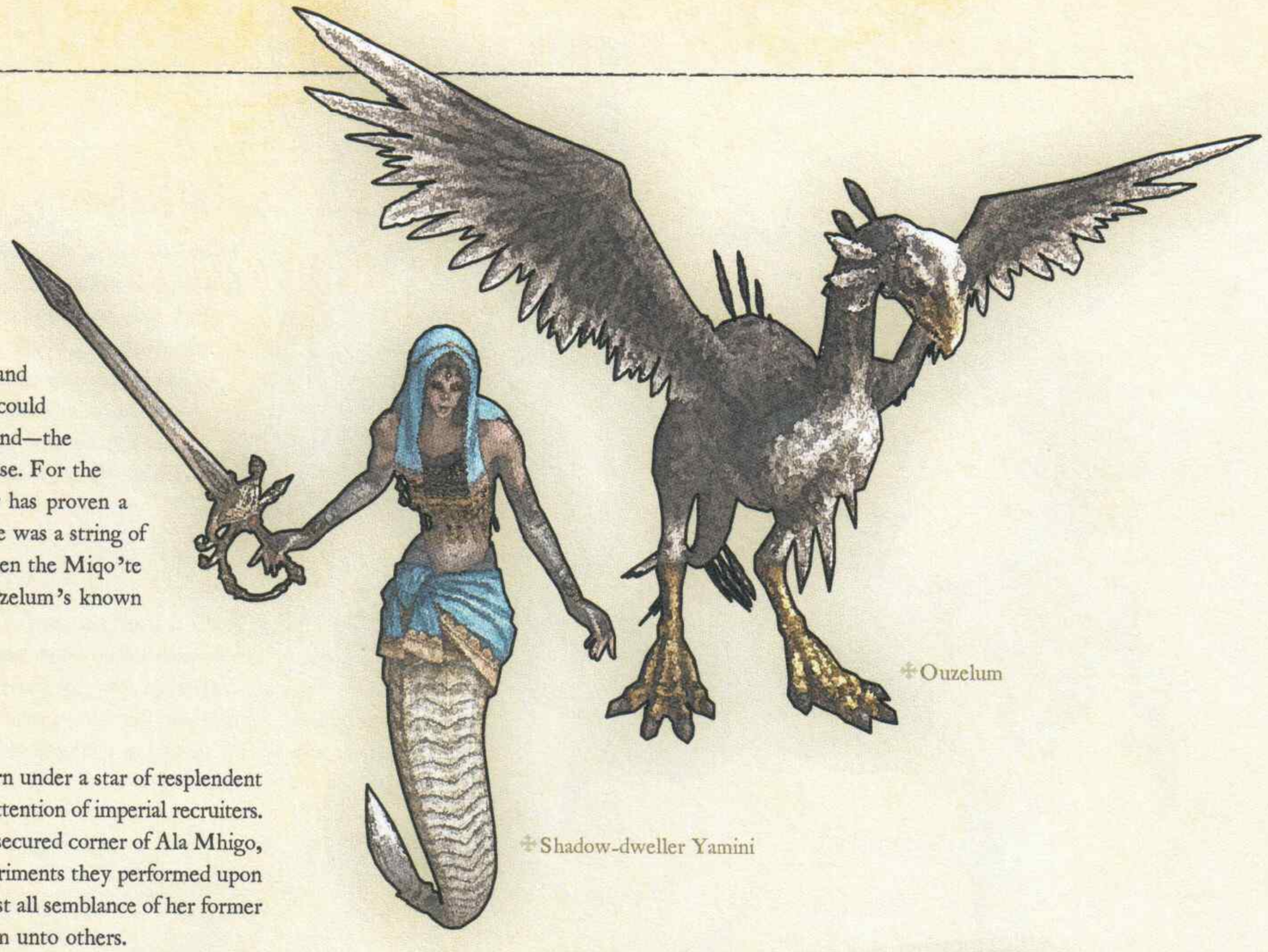
A certain Sharlayan scholar has (from the safety of his homeland) uncovered an ancient prophecy, saying that in the end of days, a deathly knight will rise from the grave and bring death and destruction to Dravania atop an ashen steed. If the scholar is right, and this "end of days" does indeed refer to the Seventh Umbral Calamity, then this supernatural horseman should already be among us. A simple glance out the window, however, is more than enough to disprove this far-fetched notion. And the adventurer who claimed she'd seen a headless horseman out in the hinterlands while hunting for treasure? Naught more than a lying looter!

The Dravanian Hinterlands

The Fringes

RANK B Ouzelum

Ouzelum is a gagana of frightening size, his beak sickle-sharp and often strung with the gore of his latest victim. His stunted wings could never lift his bulk, but do not think yourself safe on higher ground—the bird's powerful legs propel him over the largest boulders with ease. For the Ananta and the M tribe of the Fringes, this flesh-craving terror has proven a constant threat to safety and sanity. In fact, several years ago there was a string of incidents involving the disappearance of the M tribe's young. When the Miqo'te followed the trail of the suspected kidnapper, it led to one of Ouzelum's known haunts and a heart-wrenching pile of small, gnawed bones.



✢Ouzelum

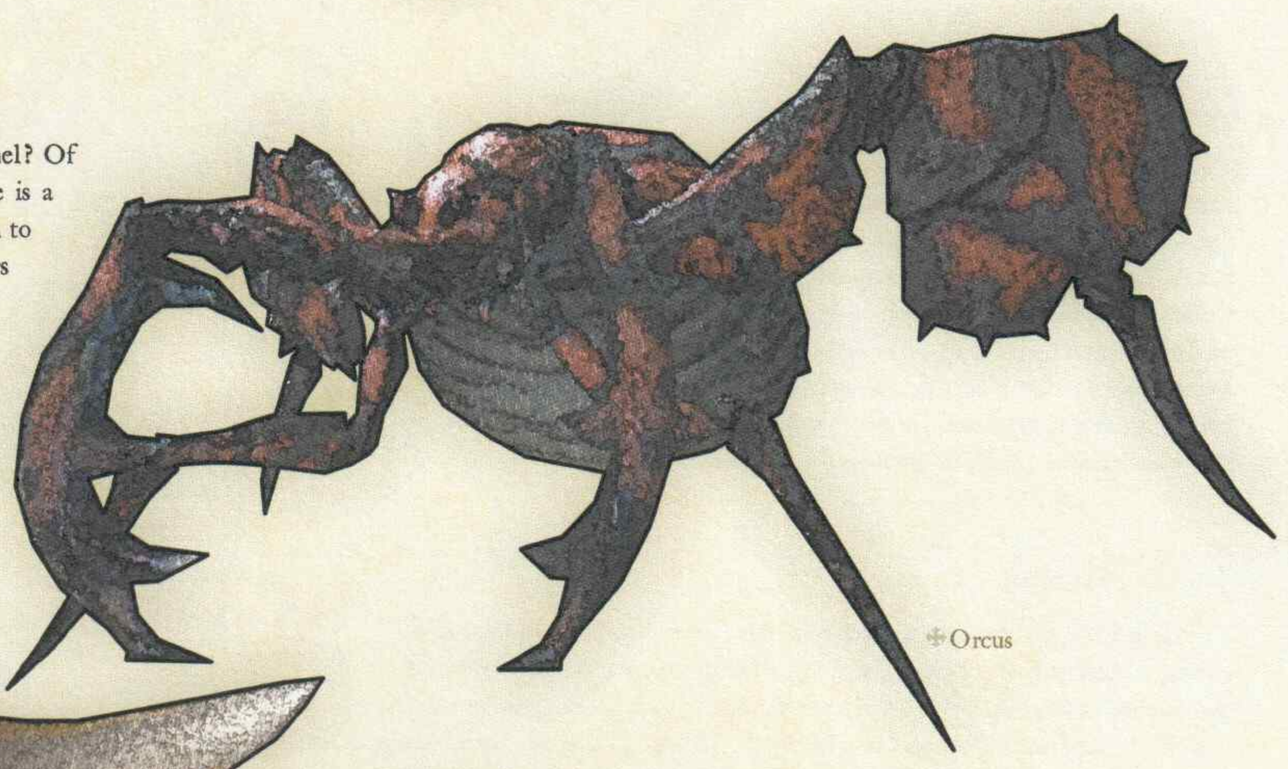
RANK B Shadow-dweller Yamini

Amongst the Qalyana there was a maiden known as Yamini. Born under a star of resplendent arcane bounty, her potent magicks brought her to the unfortunate attention of imperial recruiters. Alliance spies determined that they took the Ananta lass to a well-secured corner of Ala Mhigo, where they imprisoned her inside a testing facility. What foul experiments they performed upon her, none can say, but when she was at last released, Yamini had lost all semblance of her former self. She dwelled in a place of shadow, existing only to bring harm unto others.

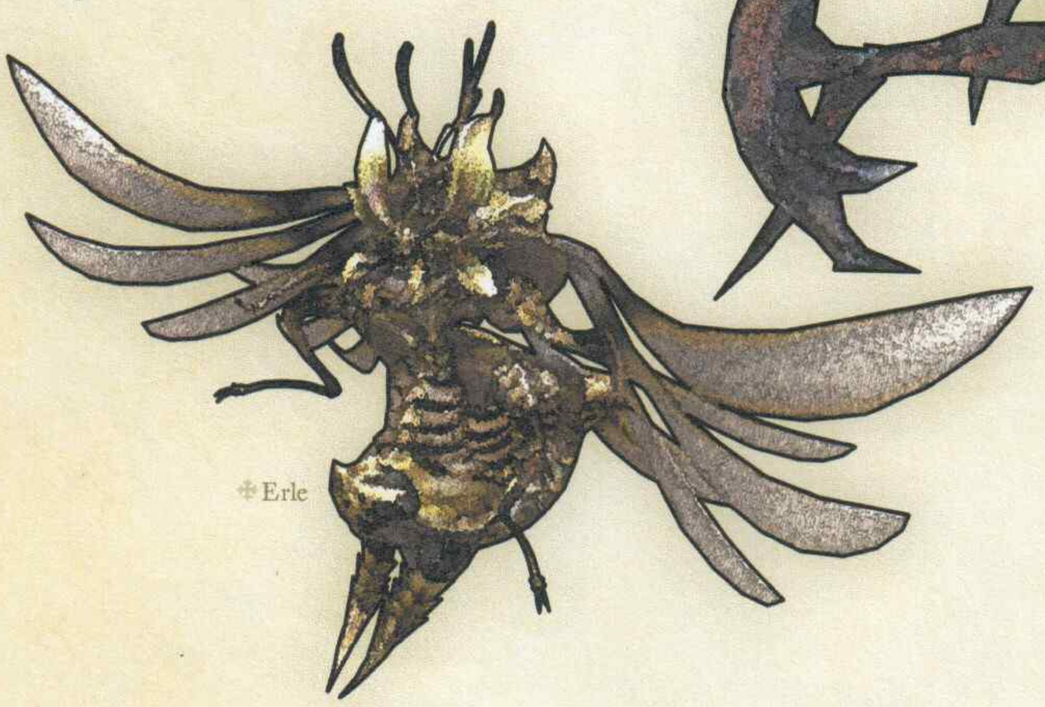
✢Shadow-dweller Yamini

RANK A Erle

What of Erle? Of her venomous sting potent enough to fell a jhammel? Of the hurricane winds whipped forth by the beating of her wings? There is a tale told amongst the Ananta—that the Nunh of the M Tribe went forth to battle this vilekin queen, trapping her within a cavern even as her stingers injected his heart with lethal venom. When the Yawn opened up, however, the ripples collapsed the cavern's walls, and the imprisoned Erle was set free once again.



✢Orcus



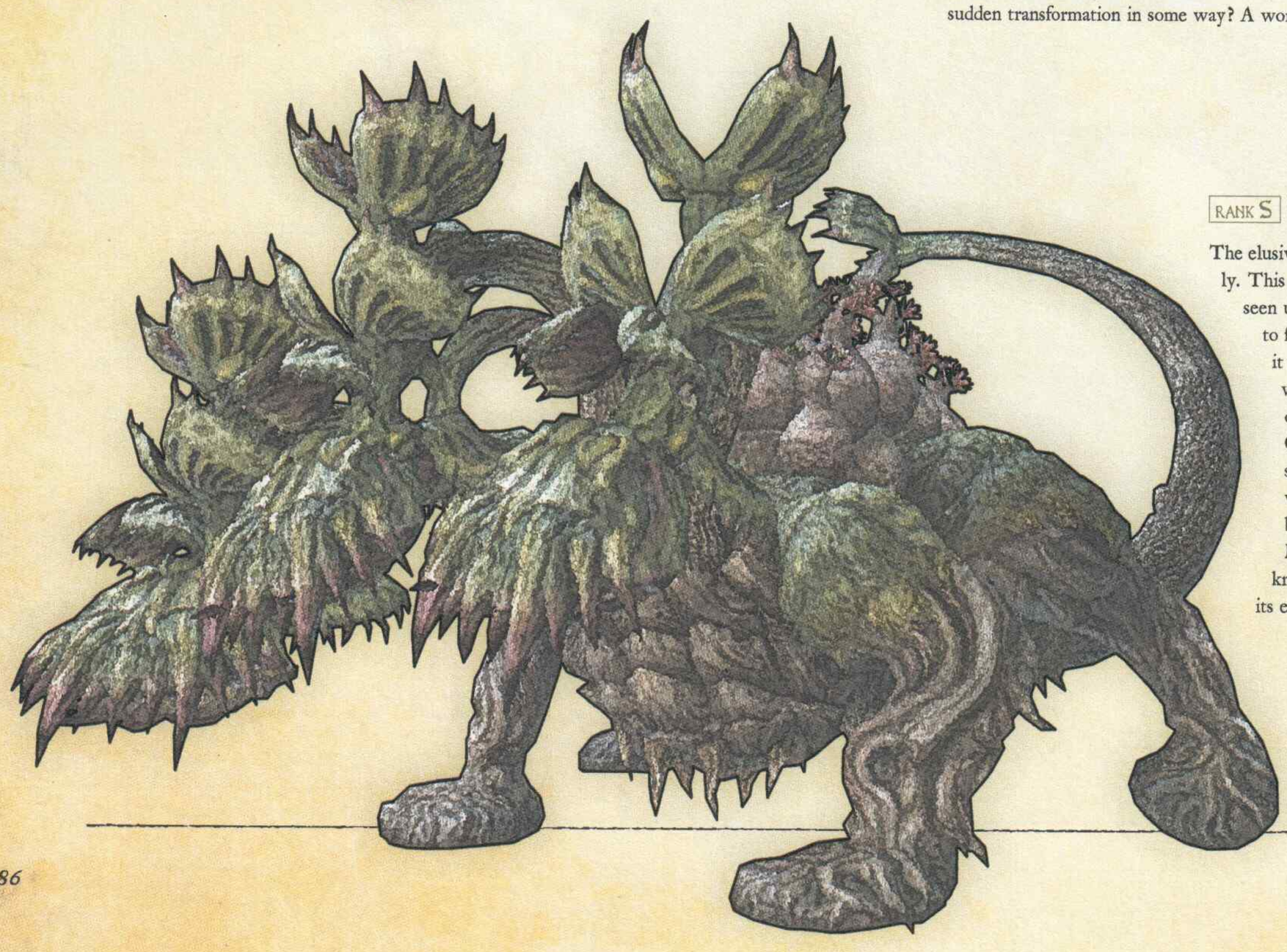
✢Erle

RANK A Orcus

Fearing their many natural predators, antlions prefer to burrow beneath the ground and lie in wait for their prey in relative safety. But Orcus is of a different breed—this monster will hunt along the surface, as bold as you please. As well she might. Why should Orcus cower from aught which walks or flies when she can spit a secretion caustic enough to erode steel? It is said that she only began displaying such behavior after the expansion of her hunting grounds brought her closer to the Percipient One. Could this proximity have influenced the vilekin's sudden transformation in some way? A worthy mystery.

RANK S Udumbara

The elusive Udumbara. Patient. Silent. Deadly. This massive man-eating plant is rarely seen until it bursts forth from the ground to feed. So difficult is this mark to find, it takes its name from a tree of legend whose flowers are said to bloom only once every three thousand years. One theory has it that Udumbara senses the silent screams of nearby vegetation, their unheard cacophony bringing word of approaching prey. Mayhap there is a way to use this knowledge to coax the monster from its earthen nest...



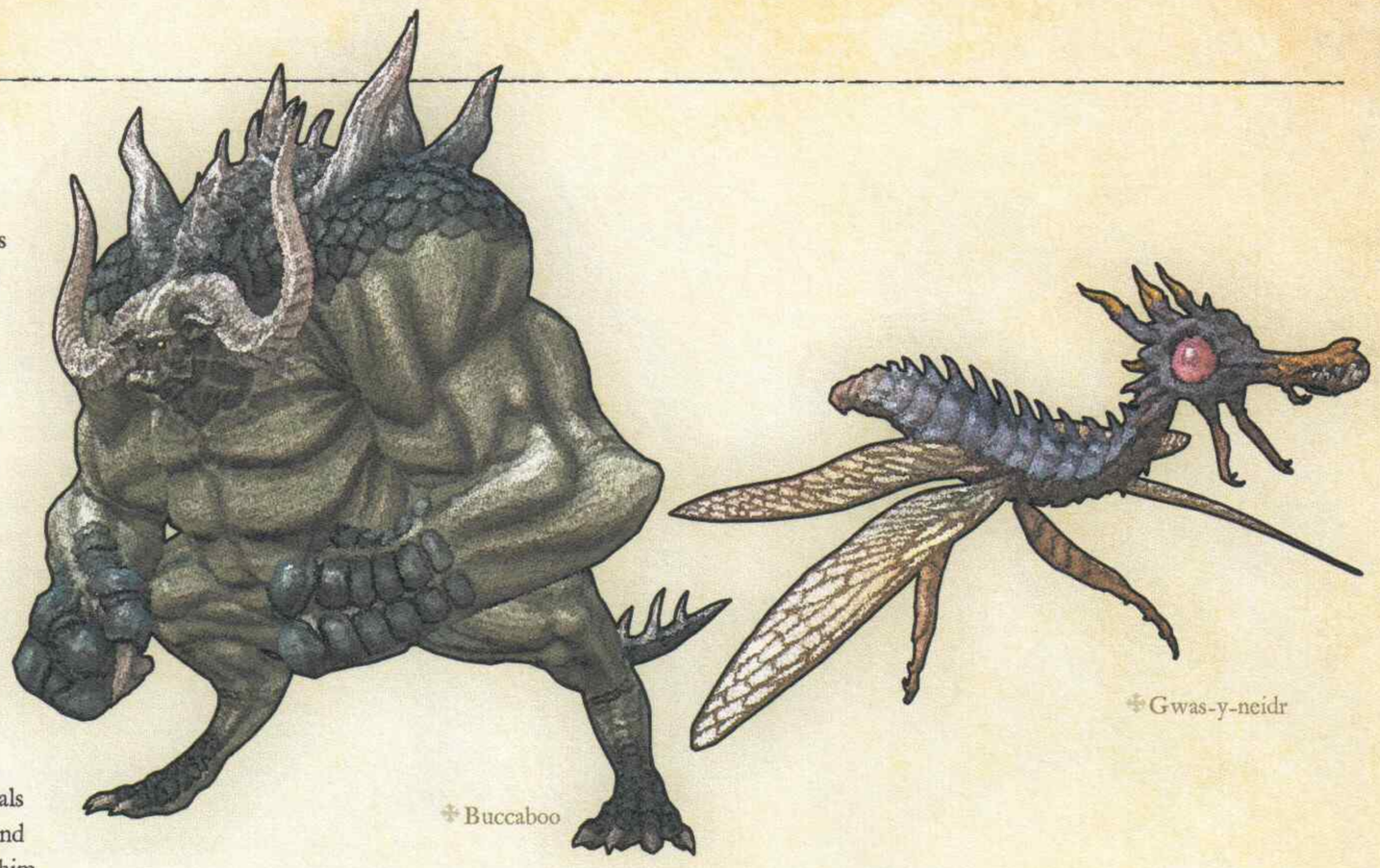
✢Udumbara

RANK B Gwas-y-neidr

Amongst the kongamato, it is unsurprisingly the females that tend to be both largest and strongest. Violent and voracious, they will mate with a male and then devour the poor soul for supper. Gwas-y-neidr is, by far, the worst of the lot—swollen to an enormous size on account of all the suitors she has devoured.

RANK B Buccaboo

The fisherfolk what drop their lines in the rivers here in the Peaks have a custom of leaving behind a part of their catch on the banks—a way to express their gratitude to nature. A stunted muud suud by the name of Buccaboo was certainly grateful, since eating those fish is how he survived exile from his clan. One day, though, he decided it would be quicker to snatch his meals straight from the fisherfolk themselves. He grew larger and larger, and eventually the fish were not enough to satisfy him. That is when he moved on to man-flesh.



✣ Buccaboo

✣ Gwas-y-neidr

✣ Vochstein

RANK A Vochstein

Griffins have been bred in Gyr Abania for generations, but the Vochstein family was famous for the quality of its beasts. The griffins they raised were sought after by all, and even the royal house had a few "Vochsteins" in its stables. Then the Empire invaded. Not wanting the imperials to steal his prized breeding stock, the head of the Vochstein family threw open the door to a certain stall. What flew out in a flurry of feathers and talons was the biggest, meanest sire what ever hunted the skies.

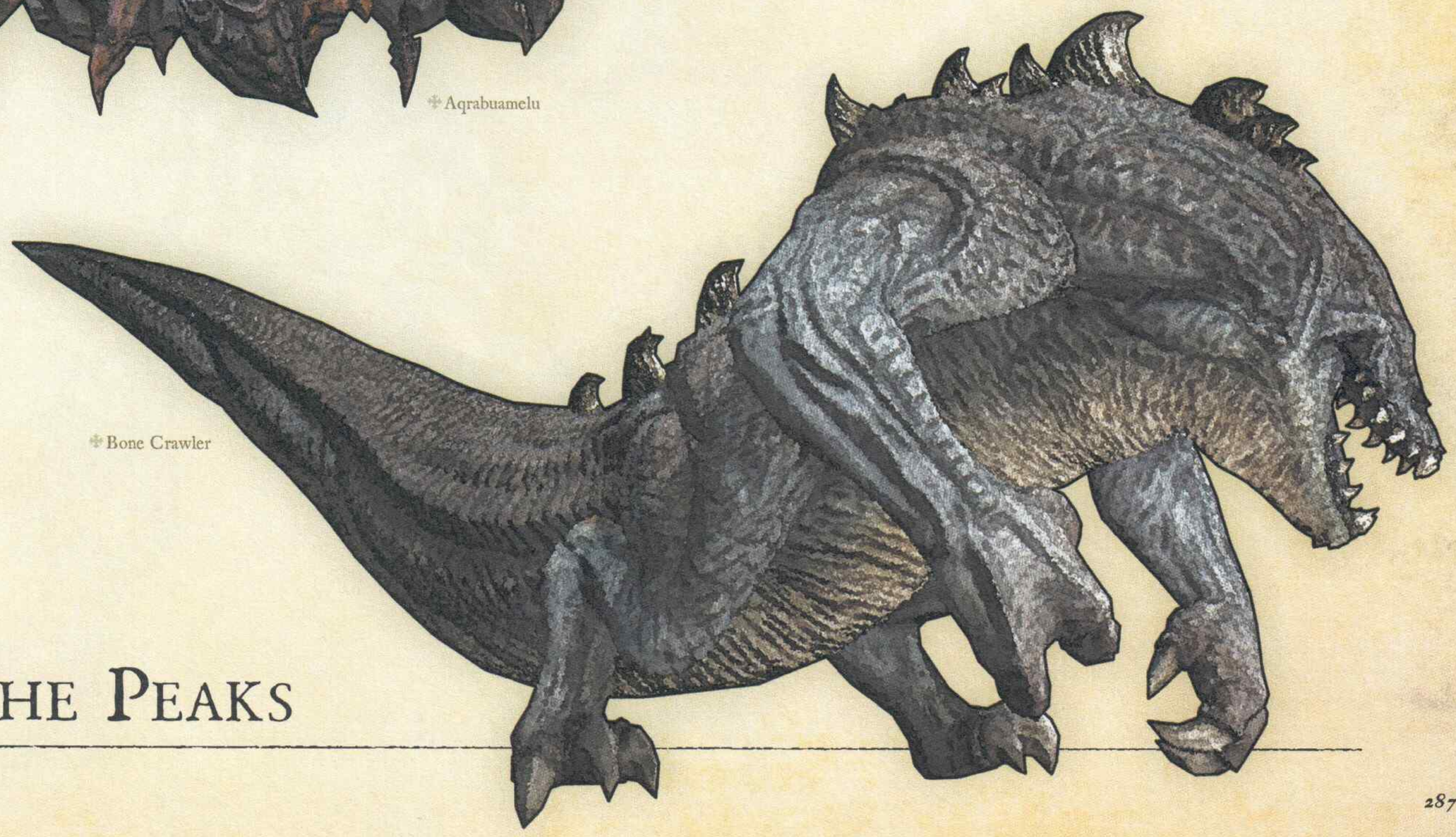
RANK A Aqrabuamelu

If asked what imperial supply trains fear the most, one might say an attack by the Ala Mhigan Resistance. They would be wrong, however. Those tasked with escorting the Empire's cargo are afraid of a visit from Aqrabuamelu—an enormous lava scorpion with an insatiable appetite for ceruleum. Every time it sinks its mandibles into a fuel tank, Aqrabuamelu's lava spray grows hotter and hotter—hot enough to melt the machina sent to slay it, and ultimately provide the vilekin with yet another ceruleum feast.

✣ Aqrabuamelu

RANK S Bone Crawler

When trade with the East was at its most prosperous, merchants used to hire mercenary companies to clear the routes of monstrous predators. It appears they were too good at their job, though, and managed to wipe out an entire species. A sort of enormous, fang-mouthed scalekin, it was, and it had been thought extinct for decades...until one of them recently attacked a merchant caravan. The man who lent the caravan his chocobos claims that "there weren't naught left of the birds—no feathers, no tackle, no skulls." Ever since, people have taken to calling the thing the "Bone Crawler."



✣ Bone Crawler

The Lochs

Kiwa

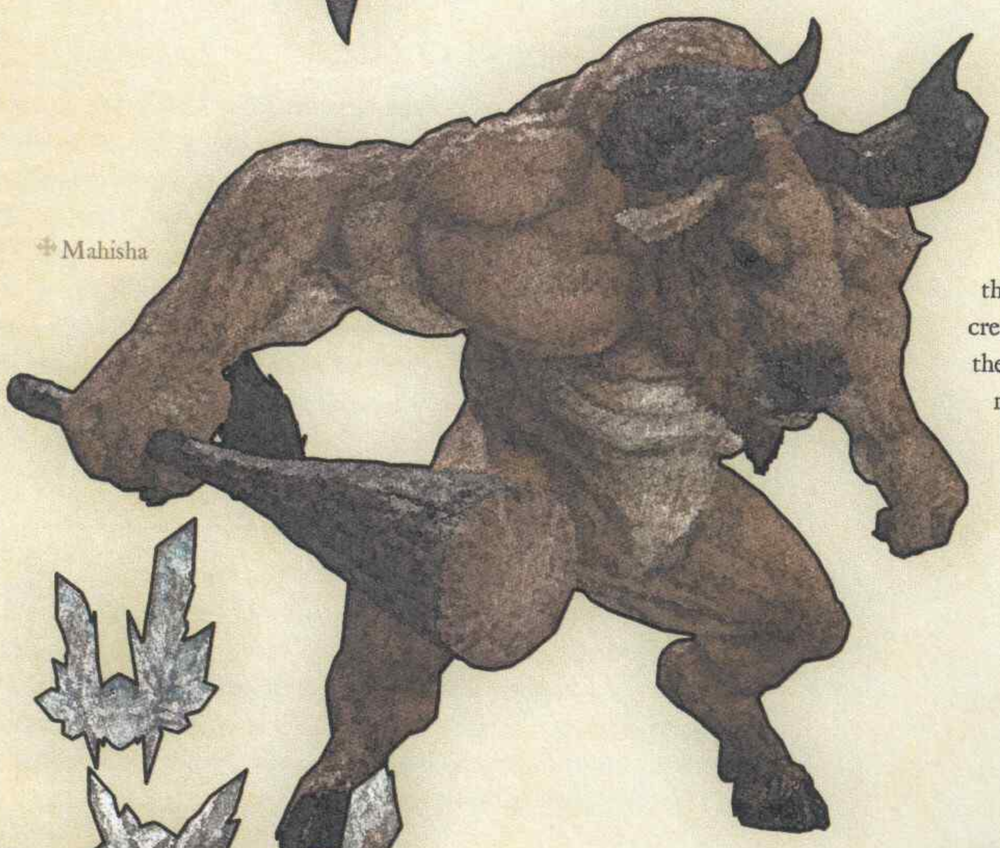
Manes

RANK B Manes

Wherever men gather, one hears rumors. Like the tale of the vast subterranean prison hidden beneath the city of Ala Mhigo. Some whisper that its cells held many Ala Mhigan nobles, incarcerated by the mad king Theodoric on the mere suspicion of rebellion. Before their vassals could free them, however, the Empire's invasion began. The imperials knew naught of the dungeon beneath their feet, and thus did its prisoners waste away in darkness. It is said that the souls of these unburied and unmourned nobles wander yet, tethered to this realm by their suffering.

RANK B Kiwa

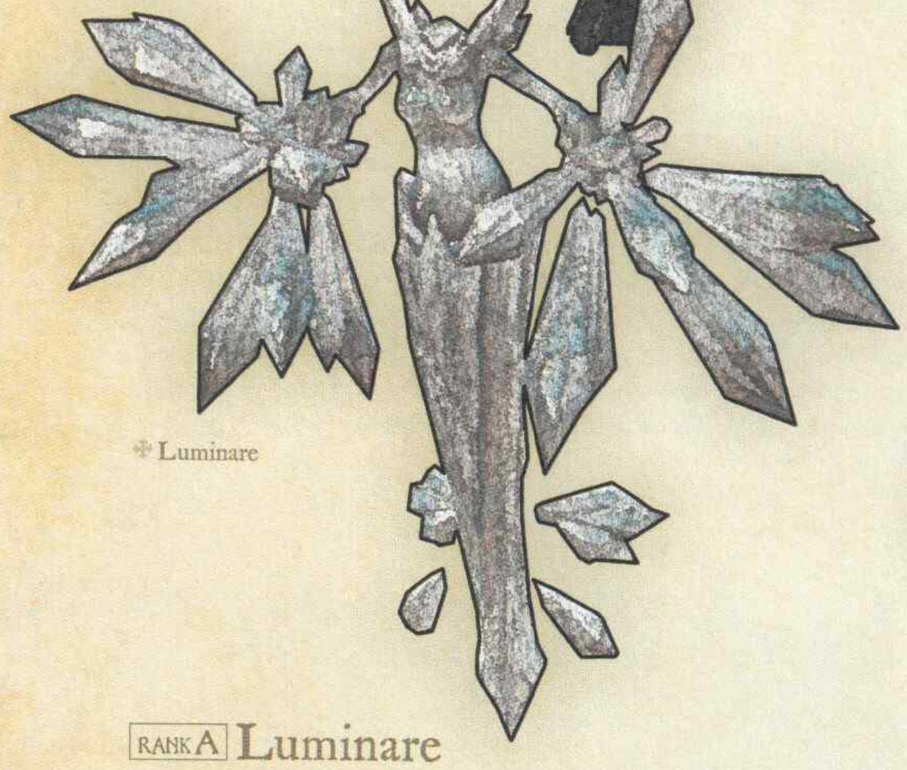
Loch Seld is home to a yabby of immense proportions known as "Kiwa." The naturalist who requested the creature be registered as a mark was also responsible for its appellation—a name taken from "the south sea isles' god of crustaceans," or so she claimed. A thorough search of the Great Gubal Library turned up nary a single reference to such a deity. Mayhap it is some academic jest only the "enlightened" might understand.



Mahisha

RANK A Mahisha

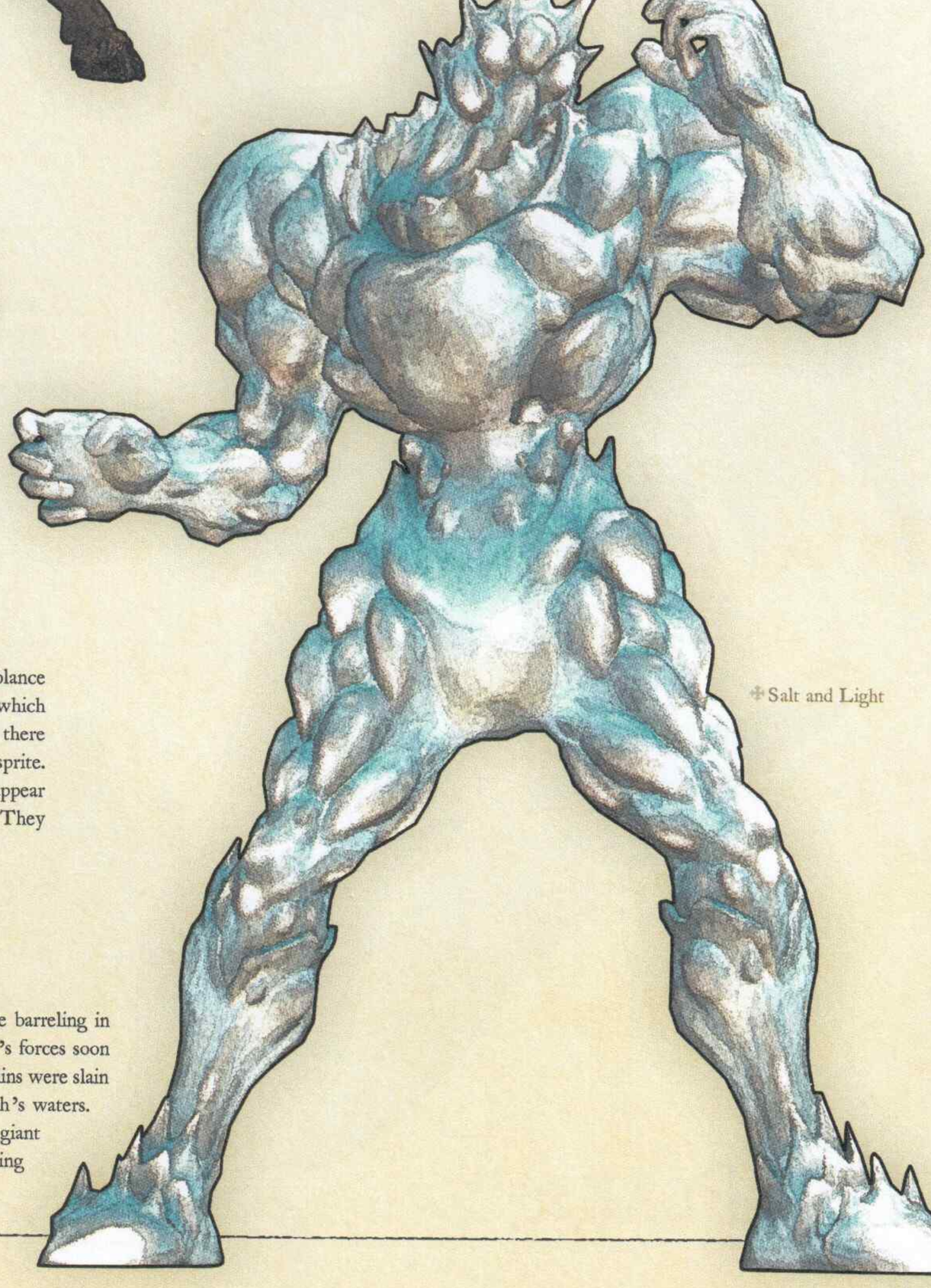
Mahisha is a minotaur who dwells in the Lochs, whose immense size and belligerent temperament is noteworthy even amongst his brutal kin. One might think such a description ordinary for a clan mark, but it was some time before the creature's true manner was discovered. Many of the initial sightings were made under the cover of night, you see. Some believed they were attacked by a lion, others a mammoth, while still others claimed a buffalo as their assailant. It was not until Clan Centurio became involved that we discovered the truth was worse than an amalgamation of all three.



Luminare

RANK A Luminare

Golems are creations of clay or stone which are imbued with a semblance of life. Luminare might be thought of as such a construction, only one which formed naturally from crystals. Considering the lack of external impetus, there are scholars of aetherology who theorize its existence is closer to that of a sprite. All we know for sure, however, is that such crystalline entities began to appear following the Calamity, and that they attack without fear or provocation. They are beautiful to behold, yes...but only from afar.



Salt and Light

RANK S Salt and Light

According to the records of the Resistance, a clan of goblins once came barreling in from the west, and smashed through an imperial checkpoint. The Empire's forces soon gave chase, and cornered the beastmen on the shores of Loch Seld. The goblins were slain to a man, but not before one of them hurled a strange device into the loch's waters. The surface of the loch was seen to bulge upwards, forming into a watery giant which proceeded to decimate the Garlean soldiers before suddenly draining away once more.

✣ Okina

RANK S Okina

Drunken pirates insist that this giant striped ray devours whales, but this is an embellishment—otherwise known as an outright lie. Okina eats only krill. The tiny shrimp gather to feed on the husks of shellfish, and when the seas teem with their numbers, that is when Okina appears, riding on the spring tide. But though the wavekin does not prey on whales, its cavernous mouth can swallow careless hunters whole. Be sure not to slip in the ebb and flow of the shallows.

✣ Funa Yurei

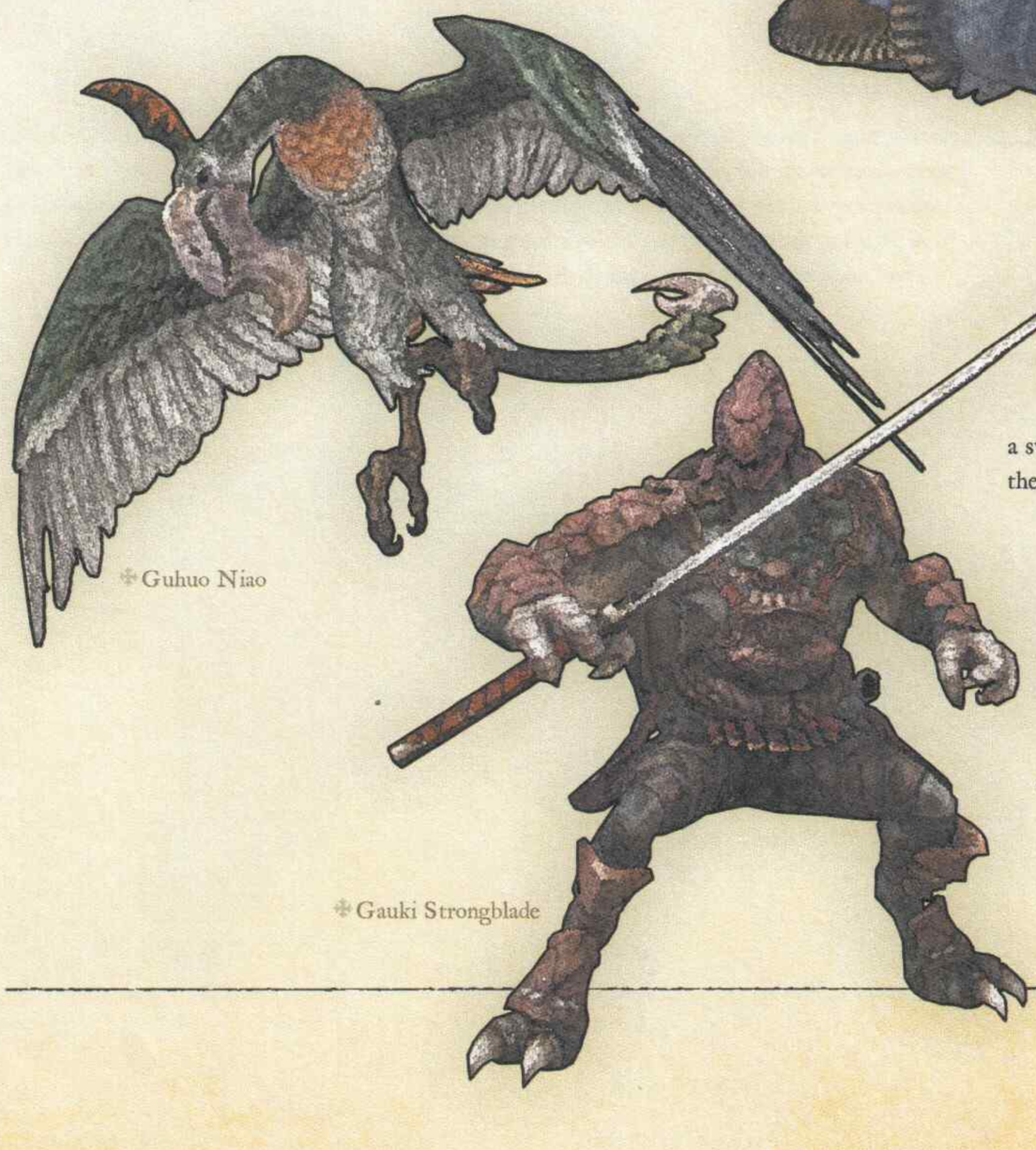
RANK A Funa Yurei

A funa yurei is, loosely translated, a "ship ghost." Pray do not misunderstand this to mean the ghost of a ship. Said to be the lost souls of those who perished at sea, these vengeful spirits seek to sink other vessels by filling them with water. Using a ladle. One could conceive of more effective methods, but who can know the mind of a ghost? Whatever its purpose, a funa yurei has been seen haunting the area. Folklore has it that a bottomless ladle acts as a ward against such apparitions.

RANK A Oni Yumemi

In the lands of Hingashi, if a creature should appear even slightly larger than its kin, it soon acquires the title of "oni." The oni yumemi is a perfect example of this. This demon specimen, however, earns the description not only for its size—though it is certainly large—but also for its violent behavior. The oni yumemi shocks its prey into unconsciousness, and feeds while the victim is lost in dreams. And if that wasn't sufficiently horrific, this mark is rumored to wield powers of freezing ice.

✣ Oni Yumemi



✣ Guhuo Niao

RANK B Guhuo Niao

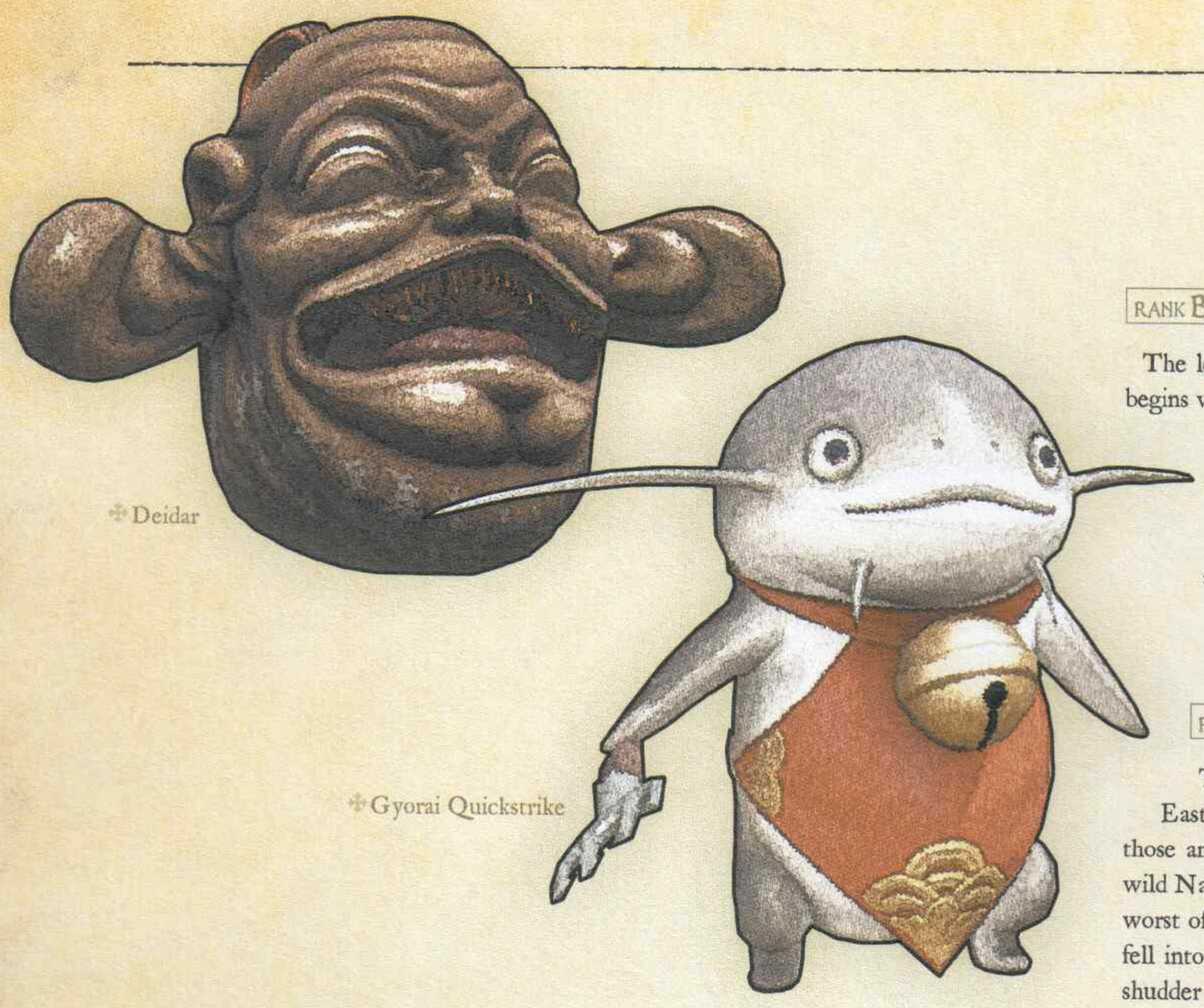
In the carnival tents of Kugane, I have seen hornbills trained to mimic the speech of men. Such a trick seems harmless enough, until you hear of the birds' wild cousin. There is a cunning cloudkin known as Guhuo Niao which has taught itself a sinister way of hunting. Whimpering and wailing in the voice of a swaddling babe, it lures in its unsuspecting prey. The victims are found torn and pale, their bodies all but drained of blood.

RANK B Gauki Strongblade

I trust the reader is aware of the Red Kojin, and their avaricious rampages across the Ruby Sea. The worst of these raiders is a vicious brute known as Gauki Strongblade. He is suspected of murdering as many as eight Hingan fisherfolk, his weapon stayed nary a moment by their pleas for mercy. But do not dismiss him as a simple savage—Gauki's skill with the sword is undeniable.

✣ Gauki Strongblade

Yanxia



Deidar

Gyorai Quickstrike

RANK B Deidar

The legends of the Far East tell of a giant by the name of Deidar. Our tale, however, begins with a man. Now, had this man simply dreamed of building a statue of the legendary colossus, all might have been well. But he was an onmyoji of dubious skill, and he succeeded in imbuing his clay sculpture with the spirit of a shikigami. In Eorzea his creation might have been called a golem. Thanks to the onmyoji's clumsy rituals, only the head came to life... It rolled free of its giant shoulders, and now waddles around the land in search of a more suitable body.

RANK B Gyorai Quickstrike

The Namazu are a beast tribe who have long inhabited the riverlands of the Far East. By and large they are a friendly sort, and welcome the trade of men. There are those among them, however, who have resisted the encroachments of civilization. These wild Namazu are considered dangerous, as they often turn their fleshy fins to banditry. The worst of these bandits was once a peaceful merchant who succumbed to feral instincts, and fell into a life of villainous savagery. With a sad shake of the head and an uncontrollable shudder do folk speak the name of Gyorai Quickstrike.

RANK A Gajasura

A beast tribe originating in the Near East, the Matanga are a hulking race of giants easily recognized by their mammoth-like heads. They have difficulty with the tongues of men, and were thus not recognized as a sapient people by the conquering imperials. Subjected to oppression and hostility, some clans found themselves driven from their own territory. These displaced Matanga drifted ever further east, where they survived by becoming raiders and pillagers. If any might be called a leader, it is the one known as Gajasura.

RANK A Angada

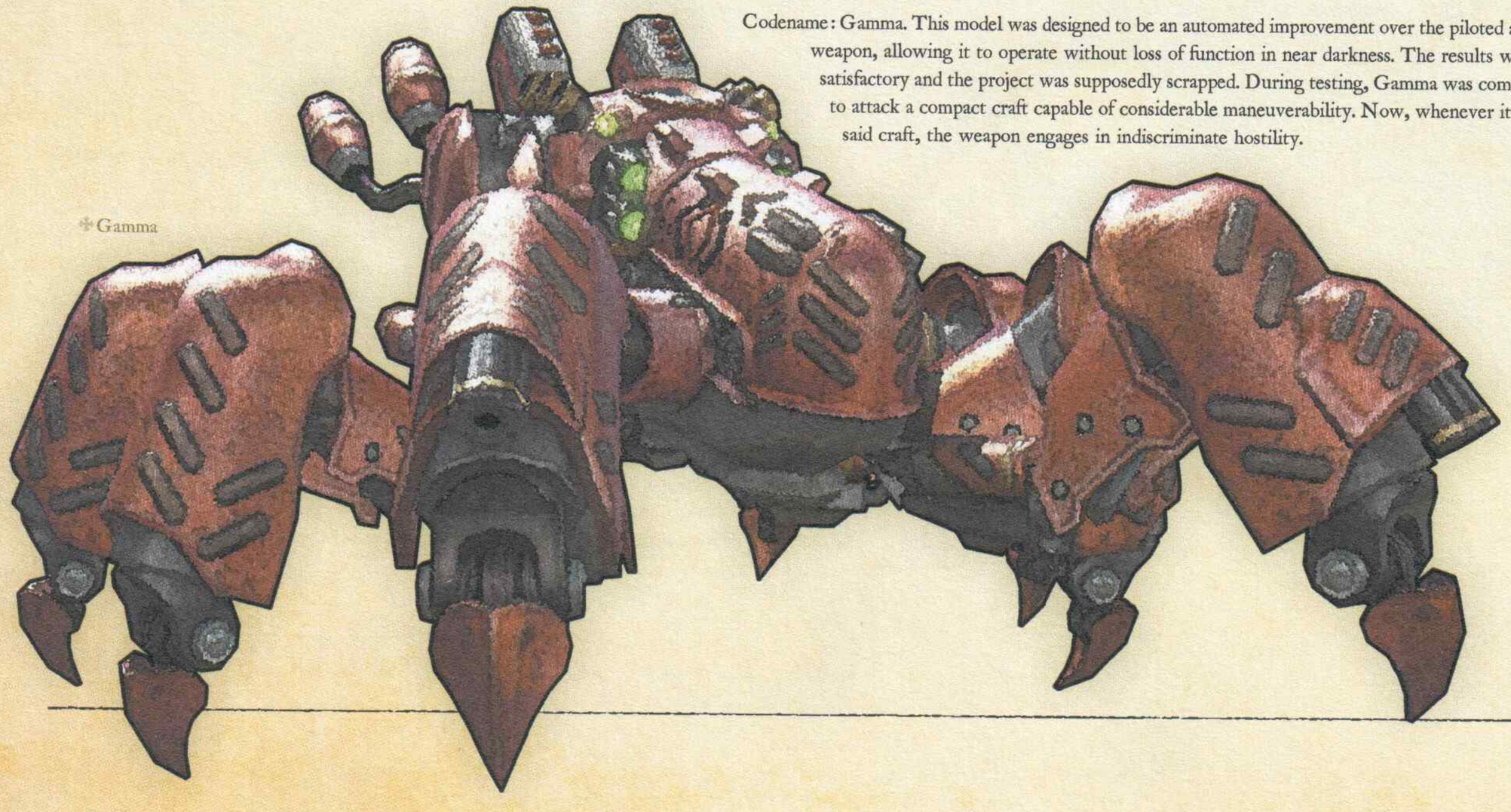
In the society of the vanara, the scrabble to win the throne of alpha male is an exceptionally violent one. So ferocious are these battles for supremacy that the death of one or both combatants is not an uncommon outcome. As such, young vanara will often leave the group for a time, and seek a solitary existence to improve their instincts for survival. Angada, the progeny of a formidable alpha, has chosen his time of exile and presently walks the wilds alone. Though not yet in his prime, this juvenile vanara is said to have already surpassed the terrible strength of his sire.

Gajasura

Angada

RANK S Gamma

Codename: Gamma. This model was designed to be an automated improvement over the piloted armored weapon, allowing it to operate without loss of function in near darkness. The results were unsatisfactory and the project was supposedly scrapped. During testing, Gamma was commanded to attack a compact craft capable of considerable maneuverability. Now, whenever it detects said craft, the weapon engages in indiscriminate hostility.



Gamma

The Azim Steppe

RANK B Aswang

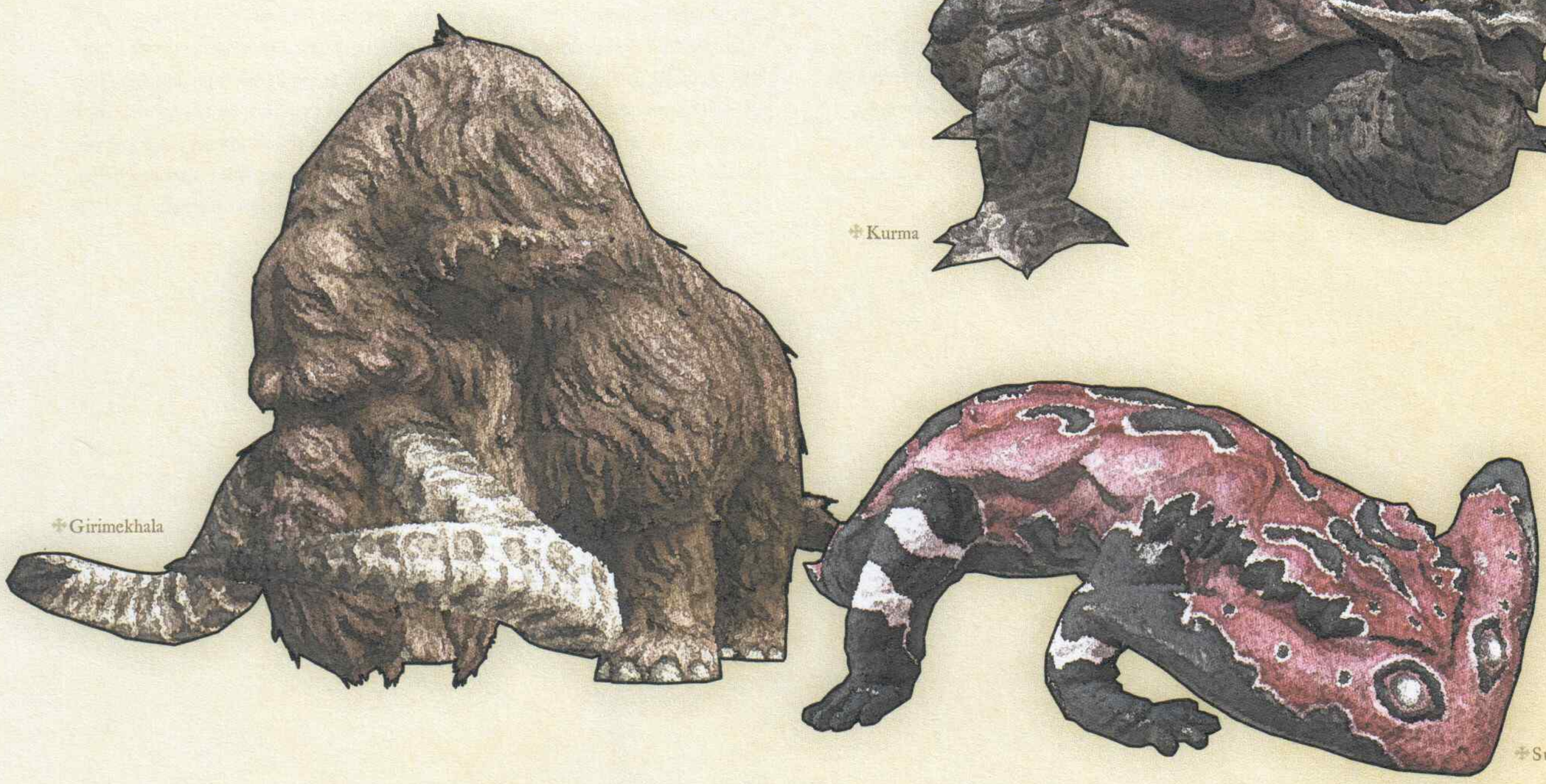
A merchant visiting from beyond the steppes claimed he was attacked by a monster from the sky. At first we thought he spoke of a yol or a muu shuwuu, but the trader insisted that it was neither of these. "A giant winged lizard," he said, in the face of much laughter. And yet his was not the last sighting of this fantastic beast. Forced to accept the truth of its existence, we call it by the word the merchant taught us in his native tongue: Aswang.

✢Aswang

RANK B Kurma

On the Azim Steppe, the matamatas are venerated for their longevity. To hunt one of these stately creatures is a great honor. The matamatas, however, are not so easily hunted. And even amongst their enduring number, there is one whose long trail of life is strewn with the bodies of those who sought to claim his shell. The steppe hunters call him "Kurma," the name spoken with hushed reverence. If you would hunt this mark, then do so with the respect this venerable legend deserves.

✢Kurma



✢Girimekhala

✢Sum

✢Orghana

RANK A Girimekhala

A mammoth is a large and powerful beast. But any Xaela who calls herself a hunter can dance around one of these steppe behemoths and bring it down with spear or bow. Yet even the elders caution us to avoid the moving mountain known as "Girimekhala"—that we would not survive to their age if we did not. An outsider scoffed at their words. Thinking to slay this king of mammoths and bask in our adulation, he set off in all confidence, musket in hand. He soon returned, sweat-drenched and shaking, swearing the bullet had bounced off Girimekhala's wooly hide.

RANK A Sum

There are two kinds of creatures on the steppes: those whose coloring blends in with the grasses and the rocks...and those who sear the eyes with their motley hues. Any child could tell you that the first kind is patterned thus to avoid discovery by predators. But what of the second? Should you ever encounter Sum, you will soon learn why its skin glistens crimson like freshly spilled blood... It is a warning.

RANK S Orghana

The Xaela of these lands have a custom wherein they carve the histories of their greatest heroes and warriors into stone reliefs. The chuluu of the hero Orghana is an embodiment of his life's journey. So much so, that the stone itself wanders the steppes, seeking to emulate the story carved upon its surface. Orghana, a son of the Himaa, was said to have had a twin sister. And one of their most famous tales concerns the vengeance he wrought upon his sibling's killers.

DOMESTICATED BEASTS

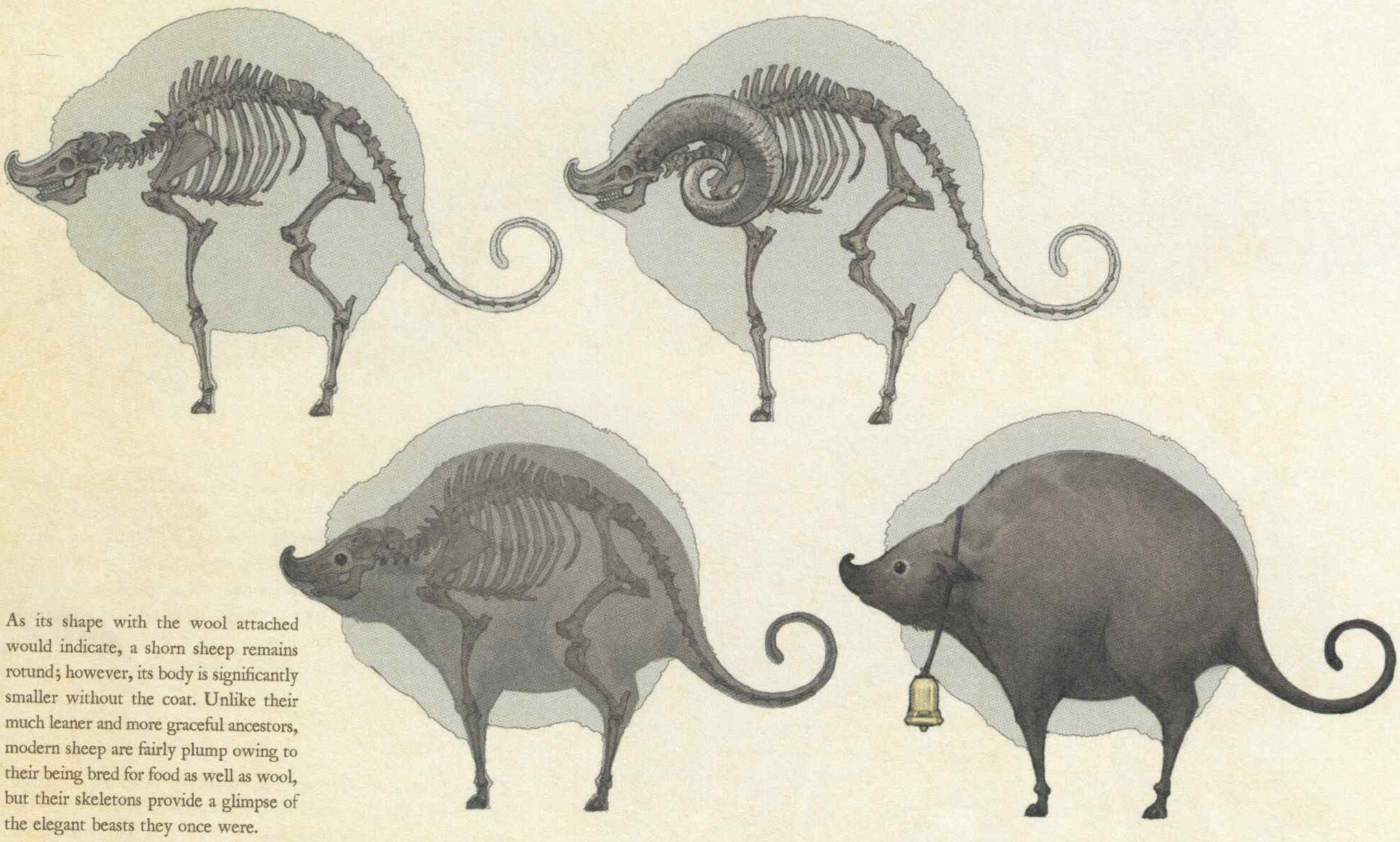
Just as a society's culture reflects the nature of the land which its people inhabit, so too do the livestock they depend upon for their livelihoods. Knowledge concerning different varieties of kept beasts and their uses is an asset on any journey to unfamiliar lands.

From Wild to Mild

Domesticated beasts provide mankind with various boons. Their fleetness of foot and wing allows riders to travel afar, their fur and skins make for fine clothing, and their meat and milk provide vital sustenance. But what differentiates them from other beasts?

To simply say they are creatures with value to bestow is insufficient, for wild beasts are oft hunted for their meat and skins, and some will even bear riders given the proper incentive and training—but domesticated they are not. Only those beasts who have been fed and bred for generations by the hand of man, carefully cultivated to possess the traits most beneficial to their keepers, can be deemed truly domesticated.

Take, for example, the prolific sheep. Its wild ancestors, the mouflon, were tamed for easier procurement of meat and milk, then became the subject of selective breeding by Hyur tribes in need of ample fleece during the Age of Endless Frost. This process gave rise to the cloud-like appearance associated with the modern species—a trait that, though vital to mankind's production of woolen yarn and felt, would be more curse than blessing in the wild. Without the care of their keepers, modern sheep would be covered in pests, fall infirm from heat trapped by their overthick coats, and become entangled in the undergrowth when trying to flee from predators. With a shepherd's intervention, however, sheep can flourish and reproduce in safety. Thus are domesticated species defined by their symbiotic relationship with man.



As its shape with the wool attached would indicate, a shorn sheep remains rotund; however, its body is significantly smaller without the coat. Unlike their much leaner and more graceful ancestors, modern sheep are fairly plump owing to their being bred for food as well as wool, but their skeletons provide a glimpse of the elegant beasts they once were.

Man's Closest Companion

The question of which species was the first to be domesticated has long been a source of arguments both grave and petty in scholarly circles. However, recent discovery of a wolf-like skeleton in a gravesite dating to the First Astral Era by Sharlayan naturalists has lent immense credence to the theory that dogs were man's first tame companions.

It is common knowledge that dogs descended from wolves, who were perhaps easier to tame than most due to their instinctual desire to form packs. Wolves were invaluable hunting partners, as their sense of smell and innate ferocity made them ideal for tracking prey, and it is theorized that they naturally evolved into dogs through centuries spent in such partnerships. Today, there are many breeds of domesticated dogs, with different appearances, sensory capabilities, and even personalities. As such, they are no longer seen as mere hunting or guard animals, and are kept as mounts and pets. By faithfully filling a vast variety of roles across the ages, dogs have earned their reputation as man's closest companions.

The shiba, native to Hingashi, were bred to easily slip through the underbrush surrounding Daitenzan in pursuit of prey. As such, they are best known for their diminutive size and intense loyalty, but a fierce predatory streak lies within.

Livestock

It is thought that mankind, after domesticating dogs, soon went on to tame larger beasts such as goats and boars. These creatures provided sustenance, clothing, and, once even larger beasts like buffalo and dzo were successfully domesticated, labor. With the strength of massive creatures thus harnessed, agriculture advanced through the employment of massive plows, and resources could at last be transported in bulk.

Its work with beastkin settled, mankind in time set its sights on cloudkin. The flightless dodo and chicken were among the first, providing a convenient source of flesh, eggs, and feathers. With each species domesticated, man's quality of life increased markedly.

Buffalo

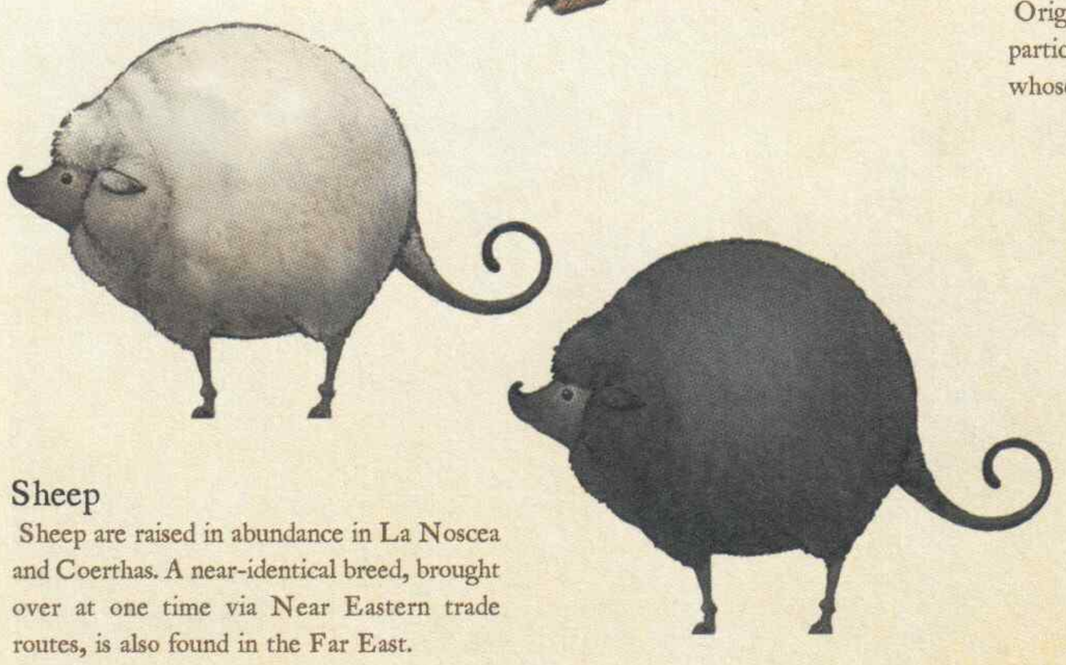
These hulking herbivores were introduced to Eorzea from the Near East as a source of meat, but are also strong enough to have historically seen use as pack and plow animals.

Dodo

The dodo, native to the island of Mazlaya, was introduced to the mainland by seafaring Qiqirn. Adult dodos produce massive eggs, but can only be safely approached if their poison glands were removed as fledglings.

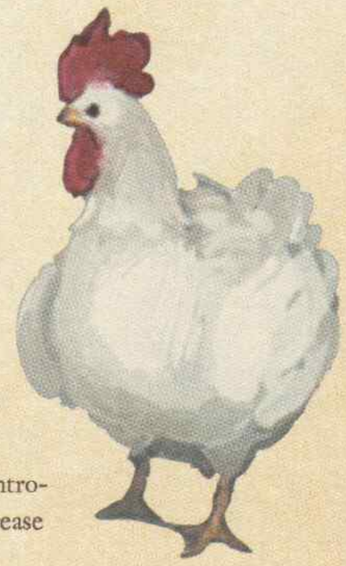
Dzo

Originating amongst the northern peaks of Othard, dzo are particularly important to the peoples of the Azim Steppe, whose lifestyles depend on their meat, milk, and pelts.



Sheep

Sheep are raised in abundance in La Noscea and Coerthas. A near-identical breed, brought over at one time via Near Eastern trade routes, is also found in the Far East.



Chicken

Originally domesticated in Othard, the common chicken now proliferates across the world. The introduction of chicken and eggs led to a significant increase in varieties of cuisine.

Mounts

Large beasts have long been employed in agriculture and transport. In Eorzea, for instance, the domesticated chocobo was first put to use pulling carts. Following adjustments to the vehicles for comfort and safety, the precursor to the modern chocobo carriage was born and, their importance to overground transport thus established, it was only a matter of time until chocobos found their place pulling chariots on the battlefield.

By contrast, the peoples of the Azim Steppe in Othard initially developed techniques to ride on the backs of their own domesticated beasts: horses. These came into use throughout the east as tools such as bridles, reins, and saddles made horseback riding increasingly accessible. Knowledge of these techniques also made its way to the west, where they were adapted for use on chocoback. Mankind is still building on them to this day, developing means to harness ever more creatures as mounts.

With the help of these beasts, man is able to reach higher speeds than ever he could on his own two feet. This has contributed to the expansion of trade and increased the rate at which information spreads exponentially.

Chocobo Breeds

The chocobo's long tenure as the uncontested mount of choice among Eorzeans has allowed ample time for breeding, resulting in the wide variety of chocobos seen today.

Rouncey

The rouncey is Eorzea's most popular breed. Rounceys are of middling size and extremely versatile, well suited to everything from pulling carriages to charging into battle. However, their willful temperament means they require extensive training before they can be handled.

Destrier

Hulking chocobos bred for war, destriers can bear soldiers in full plate and withstand frontline clashes while leading a charge. Because their strength allows them to carry even heavy riders with ease, they are preferred by the bulky Roegadyn.

Belah'dian Jennet

These diminutive chocobos were originally bred in Belah'dia for Lalafellin riders. Their small size is evidently the result of extensive crossbreeding with Near Eastern chocobos, and they are both gentle and obedient.

Palfrey

Palfrey, bred in Thanalan to thrive in arid climes, can travel great distances while consuming relatively little water. This has historically made them a popular choice for merchants and caravans traveling eastward. They are raised in great numbers in Ul'dah and Ala Mhigo today.

Flyer

These Ishgardian chocobos are more often known as black chocobos, as their feathers' inky coloration is their most memorable trait. Given the proper training, any chocobo of the flyer breed can take to the skies.

Percheron

The percheron is a rare example of a new tameable breed resulting from once-domesticated chocobos—Ishgardian ones, in this case—becoming feral and reproducing in the wild. At almost twice the size of the rouncey, a percheron can seat multiple riders; however, the breed's volatile temperament means taming one well enough that it will do so is no small feat.

This peculiar stock is playfully referred to as "fat chocobos" among adventurers. They appear to be of a mixed breed, and unfailingly boast an insatiable appetite and a mass exceeding that of any destrier.

A particular clan in the Far East that specializes in breeding and training falcons has grown independently wealthy over the years by leveraging this expertise to form contracts with local lieges.

Flying Mounts

As the use of chocobos and horses became ever more widespread, various peoples began seeking out new avenues to employ their riding techniques. In the majority of cases, they looked no further than the terrestrial, but some few set their sights on the skies. An early success came from the Azim Steppe, with the taming of yols. At the time, however, the steppe's tribes could only capture wild yols for riding; they failed to breed them for domestication.

Other examples included black chocobos and falcons. Curiously, in neither of these cases were flying creatures domesticated—rather, already domesticated species were bred until they developed the desired traits. Falcons were bred over the course of many generations to become larger versions of already extant domestic birds of prey, while various magicks were employed on black chocobos to reawaken their latent capacity for flight. It is simple even for the layperson to imagine the amount of labor and time that either result must have necessitated.

In any case, mankind did eventually achieve the means to take to the sky. Airborne mounts widened man's sphere of activity considerably, and irrevocably altered the rules of warfare. Nevertheless, at no point did they ever wholly replace horses and flightless chocobos, which are at once hardier, longer-lived, and easier to breed. Until the use of flying mounts becomes less costly by comparison, their employment will remain limited.

Parietal art discovered on the Azim Steppe. Experts place its creation sometime around the Fourth Astral Era, yet it clearly depicts nomadic Au Ra riding both horses and yol in pursuit of dzo. Also of note is the absence of sheep, which would not yet have been introduced to the steppe at the time.

Beast Tribes and Their Companions

The art of domestication is not exclusive to mankind, and various beast tribes across the continents have also developed the means to make use of local fauna. Domesticated species and their uses vary between beast tribes, as do methods of domestication—making the study of them all the more vital to a comprehensive understanding of beastman culture.

Complicating matters are the many controversies over whether various species employed by beastmen are truly domesticated. Opinions are divided, for instance, regarding the voidsent bombs that the kobold tribe replicate via alchemy for use in their digs. To avoid muddying the waters further, only species that the Sharlayan Studium has indicated can reasonably be classed with domesticated beasts will be discussed here.

An artist's reproduction of a kobold bomb incubator observed within U'Ghamaro Mines. Though the kobolds have succeeded in taming and reproducing bombs, and have even used artificial selection to increase their explosive capacity, Sharlayan naturalists deem these practices more akin to summoning than domestication.

✣Marid

✣Drake

✣Wolf

✣Elbst

The Amalj'aa—Drakes

In their homeland of Paglth'an, the Amalj'aa live as nomads, migrating with sheep and drakes across the grasslands. They value the large scalekin not just for their utility as beasts of burden, but for their role in warfare as well, and have been known to augment their cavalry drakes by engraving defensive runes into their scales or outfitting them with inwardly spiked bangles to provoke them to violence.

The Ixal—Wolves

The Ixal raised domesticated wolves even prior to their displacement from the Twelveswood, and remain reliant on them as hunting companions and guard animals. They have tamed new breeds since coming to reside in Xelphatol, including the massive direwolves that now serve as their mounts.

The Sahagin—Elbst

The Sahagin have domesticated several species native to the Indigo Deep, the most well-known example being the elbst, oft employed in underwater hunting and transport of goods. Clipping the webbing on an elbst's feet enables it to travel at speed over land, and such specimens have been cited during Sahagin incursions in La Noscea. Also bred for war are the Sahagin's giant shellfish, which they imbue with magicks for use as ballistas.

The Ananta—Marids

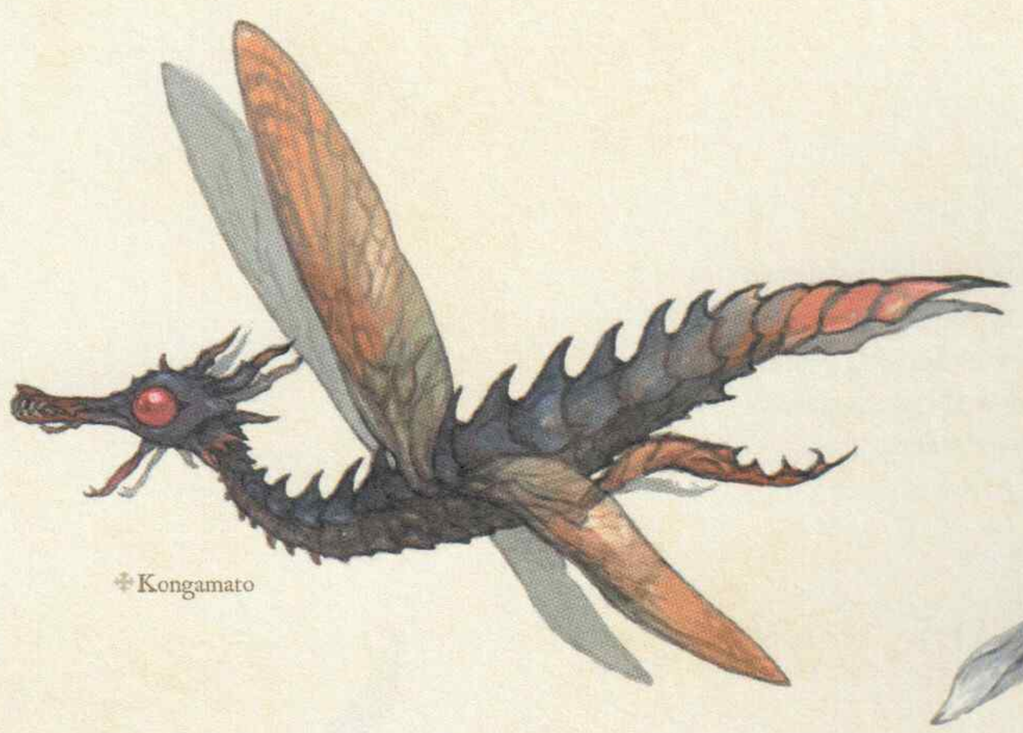
Though tamed, the Ananta's marids have not been selectively bred and are biologically identical to those found in the wild, so are not strictly classified as "domesticated." The Ananta were originally given the marids as a gift of gratitude after rescuing a Near Eastern troupe that had met with misfortune while traveling through Gyr Abania, who also instructed them in fundamental Near Eastern marid care and training practices.

The Gnath–Kongamato

The kongamato were once merely one of many vilekin species living along Abalathia's Spine, but generations of selective breeding have domesticated and enlarged them. Modern kongamato can even be employed as mounts, but because their larvae require an aquatic environment, breeding them is an inconvenient and labor-intensive process that none but the Gnath seem keen to undertake.

The Kojin–Rays

Rays, the underwater mounts of the Kojin, were bred from wild mantas over the course of many years. As a result, they are more docile than mantas, with backs better suited for bearing riders. Only a tribe such as the Kojin, able to breed and raise creatures from the sea floor, could ever have accomplished such a feat.



✙Kongamato

✙Ray

✙Sanuwa

✙Raptor

✙Wivre

Goblins–Raptors

The nomadic goblin tribe has used domesticated raptors as beasts of burden since times of eld, and are known to use teams of two to eight cart raptors depending on the weight of the load. According to legend, clever goblins also had a hand in breeding some varieties of honeybee found in kept hives today. One clan supposedly makes their living traveling the world with their swarm, collecting pollen from all manner of flowers to create honey.

The Mamool Ja–Wivres

The Mamool Ja are known to make use of wivres, a species of large scalekin, for transporting individuals as well as goods. However, as much about the western continent remains uninvestigated, scholars are divided on whether the wivres are fully domesticated, or merely tamed. Further research is required before a definitive conclusion can be reached.

The Vanu Vanu–Sanuwas

In their endeavors to make the Sea of Clouds a more hospitable environment for their tribe, the Vanu Vanu succeeded in domesticating the sanuwa. This enabled the flightless beastmen to travel between airborne islands, expanding their sphere of activity immensely. The tribe also breeds wamourae for their silk, which has prompted Ishgardian scholars to publish a thesis asserting that insects should be classified distinctly from other domesticated creatures, as "vilestock."

LEGENDARY CREATURES

There exist not just in Eorzea, but across the world, tales of powerful creatures beyond mortal ken. Though the mind may know them for fiction, the heart yearns to pursue them.

Fact or Fiction?

Some creatures are the stuff of myth: never seen, only spoken of. Though the storyteller may detail their forms, and the artist depict them alive with power on canvas, he who seeks them will find naught but whispers on the wind...or so it was believed. Recent years have seen shocking reports of the discovery and subsequent taming of once-legendary beasts. This section will discuss what is currently known of those beasts who have leapt from the pages of storybooks to reality.

The Kirin

Often treated as the king of all beastkin in Far Eastern legend, the Kirin is reputed to bear the visage of a dragon, frame and antlers of a stag, hooves of a horse, and tail of an ox. It is said to be the most gentle and noble of beasts, and reviles killing such that it will tread not upon even the smallest flower, allegedly preferring to stride through the heavens instead. It is also known as a blessed portent, which will appear before only the sagest of heroes and most benevolent of lords—so naturally, it makes an appearance in many an epic.

Rumor has it that an adventurer of good repute has succeeded in calling forth the Kirin; however, though there are a fair few eyewitness accounts of an adventurer riding atop a "godlike" stag, opinions are split over whether the beast is truly a Kirin. Some Sharlayan theologians posit that it is in fact created from its master's aether in the fashion of a Carbuncle, via an enchanted fife carved by a Far Eastern sage.

The Firebird

The Firebird, as the king of all cloudkin, is of equal stature to the Kirin in Far Eastern myth. According to legend, it can set its own body alight with flames that burn bright as the sun and be born anew, rendering it effectively immortal. As such, it has come to be associated with the concept of restoring the dead to life in folklore, and is often used as a symbol of rebirth throughout the Far East. It is to be expected, then, that those in search of immortality should pursue it. More than one tale features a hero set on hunting the divine creature, either for himself or a powerful lord offering riches in exchange for the key to life eternal.

Recent reports tell of a magic whistle that tames the Firebird, but as with the Kirin fife, it could well be a tool that merely summons a look-alike conjured of pure aether.

Coeurlregina

Tales of Coeurlregina, a towering horned coeurl, have been passed down among those dwelling along Abalathia's Spine for ages. Legend has it that her horns hold a powerful magick, and can cure any illness if boiled for consumption by the ailing.

Sightings of Coeurlregina were long thought mere superstitious delusions, but a recent influx of adventurers to Dravania has produced a vast number of eyewitnesses. In fact, the rumor that Coeurlregina was defeated by a group of stalwart adventurers but has returned to wreak havoc as a vengeful spirit has been attested to by so many that one cannot but believe there is some measure of credence to the tale—enough, at least, to advise caution when traveling to the Dravanian forelands.

Ixion

This legendary stallion is said to gallop upon a mighty levin-bolt, though sources differ as to whence his might came. According to the Fist of Rhalgr, Ixion was once the beloved steed of Rhalgr, the Destroyer, and through him gained the ability to command lightning and raze the land as he would. Ancient Mhachi tomes, however, make mention of an experiment in which voidmages successfully imbued a warhorse with the power of levin. It further explains that the horses bred for this purpose were, in fact, unicorns, and that selective breeding made their horns jagged—a trait Ixion shares. But whether he was Rhalgr's erstwhile mount or a remarkable feat of ingenuity, one thing is certain: a levin-footed steed has been sighted repeatedly during and since the Ala Mhigan liberation.

AUSPICES

The Tale of Tenzen, the Far East's most prolific legend, tells of four venerable beasts who lent their strength to the hero. Likely because of this influence, the Far Eastern canon is replete with stories of longevous creatures and their supernatural powers.

The Makings of an Auspice

According to Far Eastern superstition, a beast who lives for one hundred years—exceeding its natural lifespan—will obtain a whisper of spiritual power and a flicker of self-awareness. Those who live for one thousand years, however, gain a measure of divinity and power beyond man's understanding. Such beasts, having undergone a transformation legend calls "the change," are generally referred to as "auspices."

Tamamo Gozen

Also known simply as the "nine-tailed fox," Tamamo is a powerful auspice, unrivaled by even fellow foxes who have undergone the change. She appears in several legends, but the most popular is the tale of Tamamo Gozen and Lord Shoen of Doma.

Long, long ago, while making her way to the One River for refreshment, Tamamo stumbled upon a gravely wounded samurai. Taking pity on the youth, she transformed herself into a maiden and, snatching him from the jaws of death, carried him to her shrine deep in the mountains. As fate would have it, the young samurai was none other than Shoen—younger brother to Doma's ruler, Seien, and leader of the people's rebellion. Shoen was immensely grateful for Tamamo's ministrations, but his thoughts were always with his comrades and his people, and he yearned to return to the battlefield to aid them. For her part, Tamamo was deeply moved by his idealism and compassion, and soon fell in love. When it came time for the fully healed Shoen to leave her, she begged that she be allowed to accompany him; however, still believing her to be a young lady, he refused to entertain the thought. Undeterred, Tamamo at last revealed her true form.

"My lord," she said, "I am no fragile maiden. Indeed, I think you shall find my strength a boon in the days to come." Thus did Tamamo Gozen join Lord Shoen's cause, granting him the power to depose his brother at last, and free his people from tyrannical rule. Upon taking the throne, Shoen spared no expense in rebuilding Tamamo's mountain shrine, and instilled in his children and grandchildren a reverence for her that would last long after he passed on. Tamamo herself swore to protect Yanxia evermore.

As a matter of interest: those present during the Garlean invasion twenty-five years ago claim to have seen a nine-tailed fox fending off the encroaching army and knocking airships from the sky. In the end, it was surrounded by warmachina and simply vanished from the battlefield, leaving only rumors of the legendary Tamamo Gozen in its wake.

The Four Lords

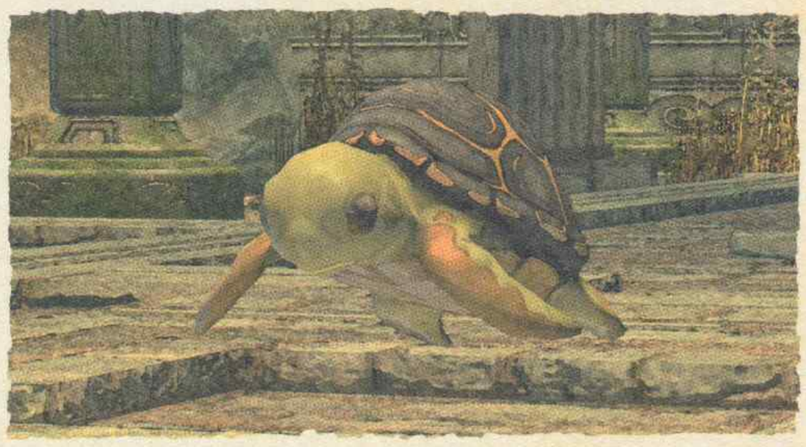
The quartet of beasts that appears in the Tale of Tenzen: Genbu, Byakko, Suzaku, and Seiryu, is also known as the Four Lords. In the tale, they assist the hero in driving off myriad vile oni that had been terrorizing the populace. If this is true, they may have been, or may still be, auspices, given that the tale has them remaining in the Far East to protect mortal lands even after Tenzen ascends to heaven. In any case, they certainly are treated as auspicious, and many an elegant screen and imposing statue bears their image.

Byakko

Byakko, the tiger, is said to guard the western frontier. According to the tales, he was the first to become Tenzen's companion, and is distinguished by his glossy white coat and unparalleled martial prowess. Incidents in which white-coated Yanxian tigers are mistaken for Byakko, causing a short-lived but intense uproar, are reported occasionally.

Genbu

Genbu, the tortoise, is the eldest of the Four Lords. His characterization in most legends befits this: he is depicted as wise and composed, steadfastly harboring his comrades behind his unbreakable shell. Some, but not all, tales also portray him as clairvoyant.



Suzaku

The guardian of the south, Suzaku, is depicted as a majestic bird with fiery red plumage. Some stories associate her with rebirth, but scholars theorize that this is a result of her being incorrectly conflated with the Firebird or Phoenix, legendary beasts with similar characteristics.

Seiryu

The guardian of the east is an imposing dragon with cerulean scales. Artists often show him grasping a jewel of immense power in his right claw. In the tales, said jewel is often put to use creating miracles, and as a result several locales worship Seiryu as a god of geomancy.

THE LUCAVI

Following countless failed attempts by revolutionaries to reclaim their kingdom, the Garlean Empire abandoned its attempt to assimilate Dalmasca into a functioning territory, and ordered the capital city of Rabanastre reduced to ruin. Yet from beneath the smoldering rubble did rise the inhuman cries of demons long imprisoned in a darkness of their own making. The Lucavi were captive no more.

King Delita & the Zodiac Braves

If one were to cite a single legend known the entire breadth of Ilsabard, it would most likely be the tale of the Zodiac Braves—twelve heroes who delivered the mythic realm of Ivalice from the clutches of evil. It is said that when times were at their bleakest, these bastions of light would rise up to defend the people and restore balance to the world. At least eight times did the heroes descend upon the land, each time led by charismatic leader who saw his noble men and women to victory. Müllenkamp the star seer, Saint Ajora, the assassin Ashley, all shine in their tales, but by far the most popular has always been King Delita.

Subsequent to the death of its king, Ivalice's long-standing Atkascha dynasty found itself without an heir. In an attempt to claim the throne, the Order of the Northern Sky under the banner of the White Lion and the Order of the Southern Sky under the Black Lion waged war, resulting in the death of thousands and a veritable stalemate. When all of Ivalice was at war with itself, Delita and eleven of his most trusted companions set out to bring order to the realm. Though not of noble birth, the young man would ultimately unite the land as regent, and the twelve became known as that era's Zodiac Braves.

There has been much debate as to whether the legend is based on actual historical events or merely fiction, but most scholars agree that there is simply too little evidence to substantiate claims of Ivalice's existence. There is one prominent name, however, who refuses to bend to popular consensus: Jenomis cen Lexentale, principal of the Majestic Imperial Theater Company, renowned playwright, and self-proclaimed authority on the realm of legend. According to Lexentale, one need only turn their eyes to "auracite" for proof of his claims.

Auracite

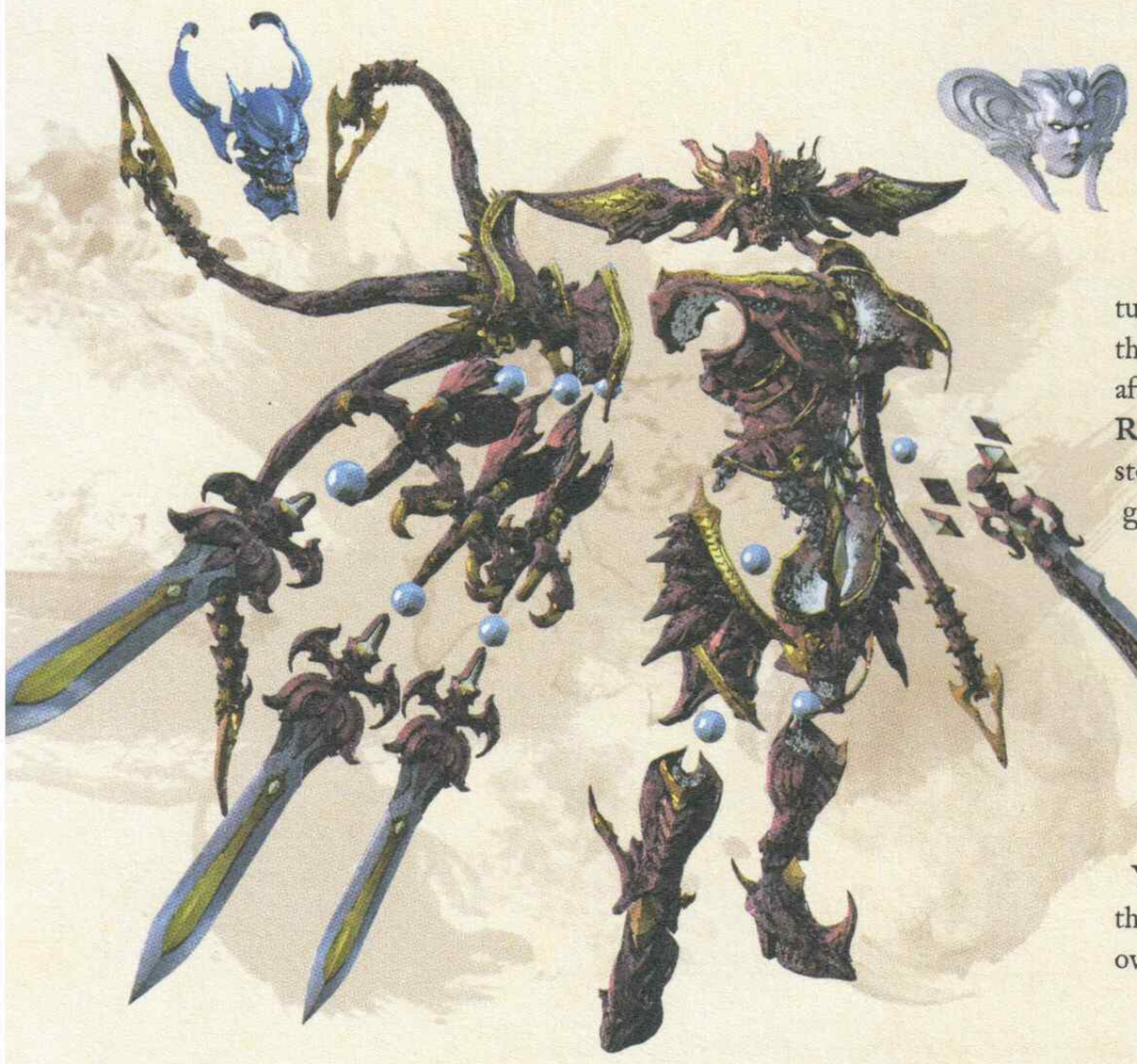
The Zodiac Brave Story tells us that Delita, acting at the behest of the Church of Glabados, set out with a company of knights to recover twelve(*) lost Zodiac Stones—holy relics created by the gods of Ivalice. Jenomis Lexentale puts forth the hypothesis that these relics were, in fact, a substance called auracite, and goes as far as claiming he has come into possession of such a stone.

While fanciful the notion that it might be of divine origin, Lexentale suggests that auracite is much more than merely elementally aspected aether. As if by some higher design, the crystalline shards appear to possess the power to make manifest one's deepest desires, be they fair or foul. This is borne out by the fact that the stones are credited in the Zodiac Brave Story both with destroying Mullonde, city of the gods, and granting Delita the power to bring order to chaos in his kingdom. When its wielder's will is weak and his intentions ill, the auracite will take hold of his body and mind and corrupt them both, rendering the twain unrecognizable. Recent visitors to the fallen city of Rabanastre have returned with tales of beasts unlike any heretofore recorded. Lexentale insists that these are none other than the Lucavi.

As to the validity of these claims, a pronounced lack of evidence beyond the Majestic principal's good word has left scholars across Eorzea in substantial doubt. One Sharlayan student of aetherial phenomenon, however, has pointed to similarities betwixt primal summoning and Lucavi transformation as reason to suggest that such unholy manifestations may, in fact, be possible; though she does not go as far as to comment on their plausibility.

(*Scribe's note: some iterations of the legend have the number of auracite stones at as few as six, while others claim it to be upwards of a thousand.)

Recent unauthorized expeditions into the ruins of Rabanastre and the Ridorana Lighthouse by the aforementioned Lexentale family have confirmed the existence of countless abominations warped and twisted in a manner that suggests they might be Lucavi themselves. However, a more rational conclusion might be that the creatures were merely innocent bystanders drawn by the inexorable call of the auracite.



Argath Thadalfus

According to legend, Argath Thadalfus was once heir to a High House which had fallen into disrepute through the ignoble conduct of its then lord, Argath's grandsire. Cursing his family's diminished circumstances, the youth turned his ire upon the only souls over whom he still retained any influence: the smallfolk. But Delita, hero of the common man, would not suffer this, and after trying and failing to reason with Argath, put him to the sword in the Royal City of Lesalia. Jenomis claims, however, that there is more to Argath's story, and makes mention of an heirloom passed down from generation to generation in House Thadalfus: a priceless jewel known as the Duma. Upon Argath's death at the hands of Delita, the power of the Duma—which the young Thadalfus carried upon his person—was unlocked, and the Lucavi bound to it released. The stone duly gave form to Argath's fury, reanimating his body, and granting him the strength to exact revenge upon the one who ended his life. Yet who should spare Delita that fate but Ramza, who battled the vengeful corpse unbeknownst to his childhood friend, and finally brought peace to Argath's soul.

Yet, if this were true, then how did the slighted nobleman come to rest beneath the foundations of Rabanastre? Did the revenant still seek a kingdom of his own, after countless winters, or was he summoned to the city by a higher will?

Yiazmat

During the fall of Nalbina Fortress at the hands of the Garleans, there was a fusilier captain—Ba'Gamnan—charged with protecting the crown prince and princess. When the royal twins perished, the proud Bangaa blamed himself for their deaths and vowed revenge on the Empire. After coming into possession of the Duma, Ba'Gamnan's self-loathing and his desire for vengeance became manifest in the form of Yiazmat, a Lucavi not unlike Argath Thadalfus, but spawned from an entirely different seed. This would imply that it is the subject that determines which Lucavi manifests, and that the auracite merely facilitates the process.

Encyclopædia Eorzea

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